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## Ghost Towns in the Spotlight

[PAGE 110]

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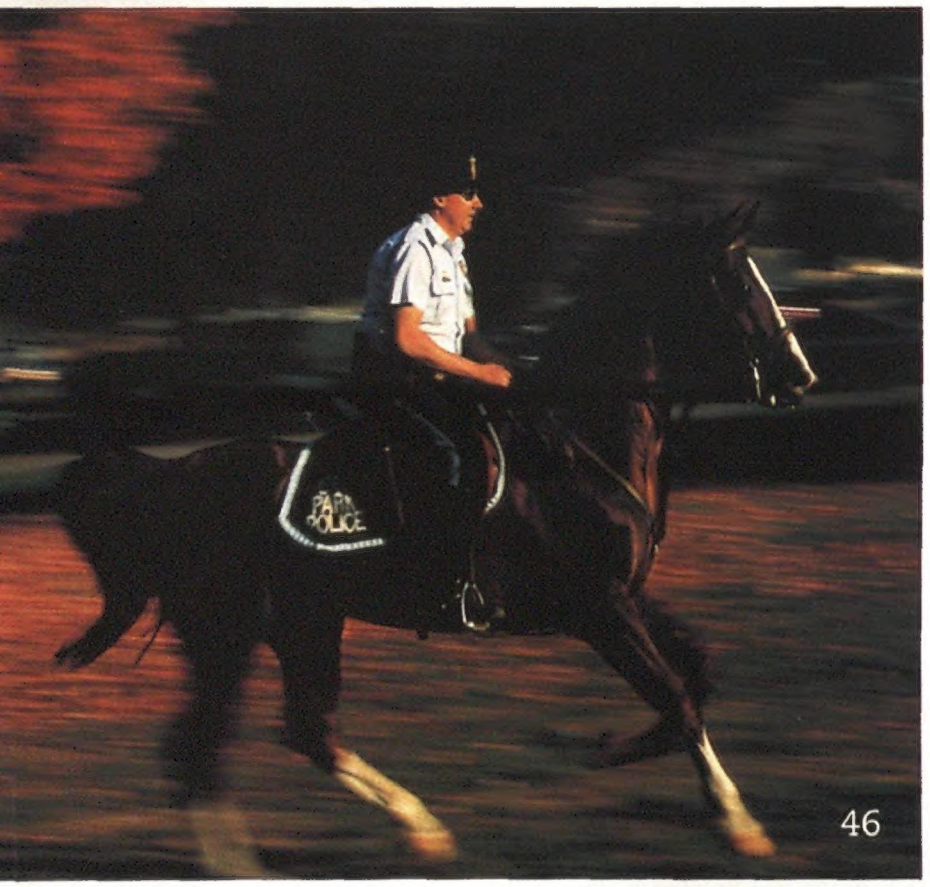

46

58

SMITHSONIAN

# features

MAY 2001 ♜ VOLUME 32, NUMBER 2

46 The Horses Exalt the Officers Who Ride Them
Cantering through smoke, over obstacles and down city streets, recruits in Washington, D.C. train for careers as mounted police
BY VERLYN KLINKENBORG ◆ PHOTOGRAPHS BY REGIS LEFEBURE

58 A Lavish Legacy
Heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post's vast collections, of Sèvres porcelain, Fabergé eggs and more, dazzle visitors to Hillwood
BY HELEN DUDAR

72 Le Bocuse d'Or
*La petite Américaine* Tracy O'Grady and other top chefs go for the gold in the prestigious annual cook-off in Lyon, France
BY RUDOLPH CHELMINSKI ◆ PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAY CHERNUSH

82 Calder's Playful Genius
Famous for his colorful mobiles, the prolific sculptor was also a master toymaker, wire portrait artist and painter of gouaches
BY PHYLLIS TUCHMAN

94 Seeing Fingers Decipher Bones
To forensic anthropologist Marsha Ogilvie, the dead do tell tales—and she uncovers their stories using only her sense of touch
BY JAKE PAGE ◆ PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUGLAS MERRIAM

104 The Pleasure of the Rare Book
Treasures from the Smithsonian Libraries—a Wright brothers bio, a repoussé prayer book—can be savored in a new show

110 Ghost Towns by Night Light
A photographer captures the eerie desolation of Bodie, Masonic and other old mining towns
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BERTHOLD STEINHILBER

Smithsonian journeys

For Smithsonian Journeys on-line, visit
WWW.SMITHSONIANMAG.COM/JOURNEYS/

122 King of the Lobby
Representing big-name clients and foreign interests in Gilded Age Washington, the large-living Sam Ward made lobbying an art
BY KATHRYN ALLAMONG JACOB

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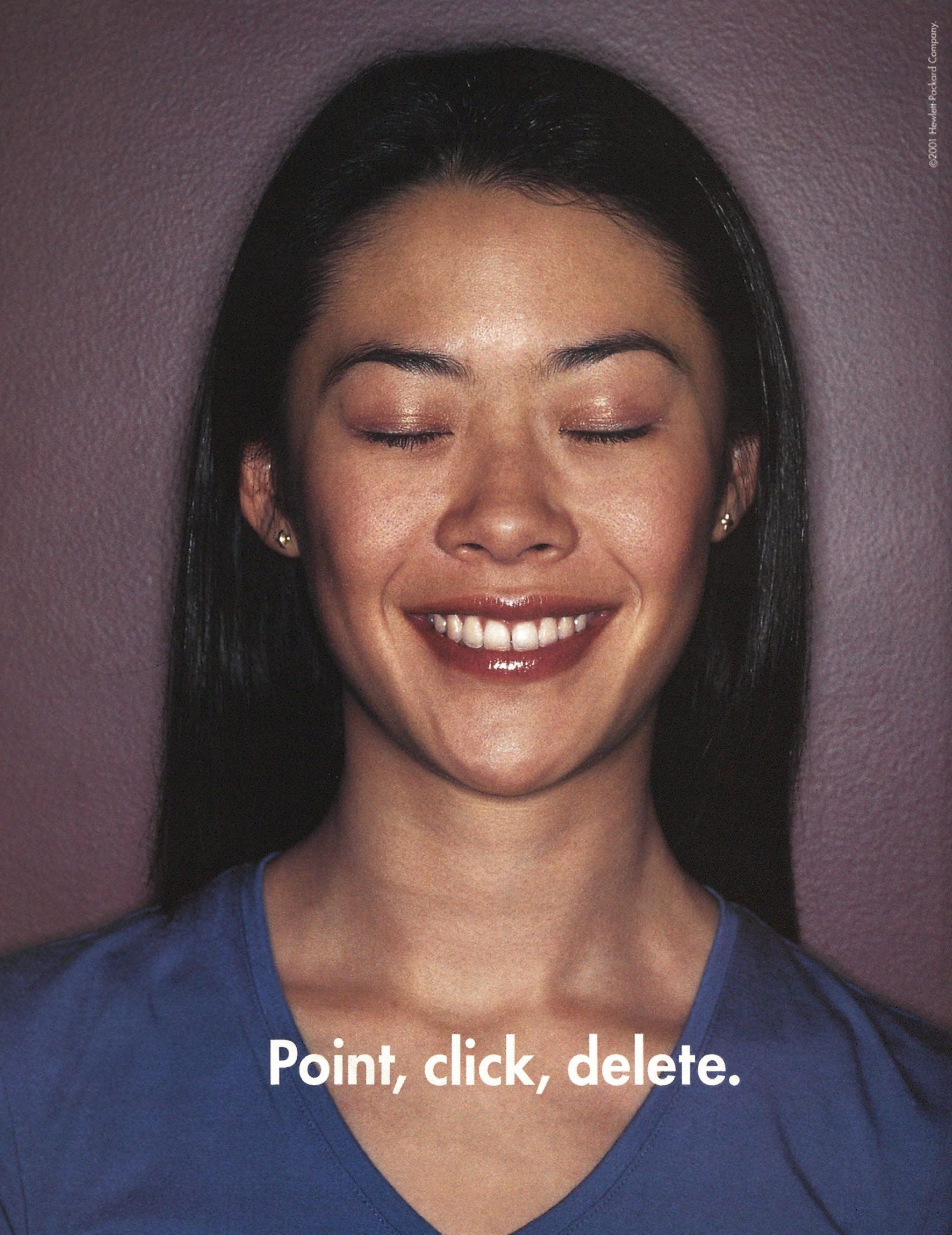


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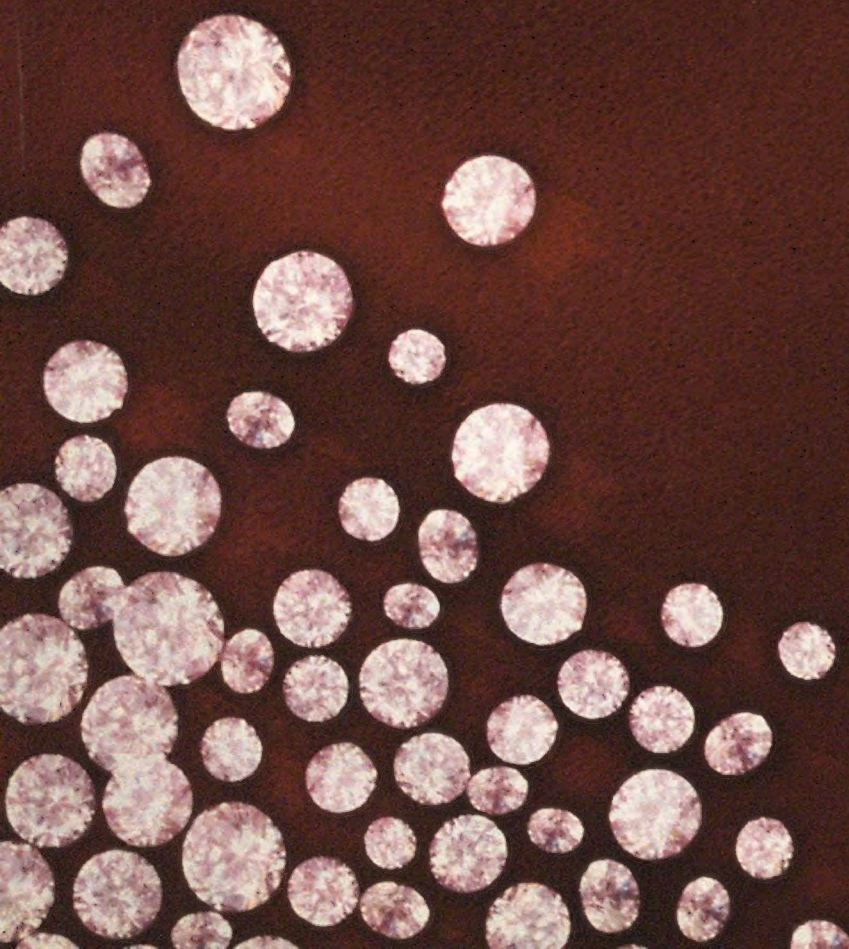

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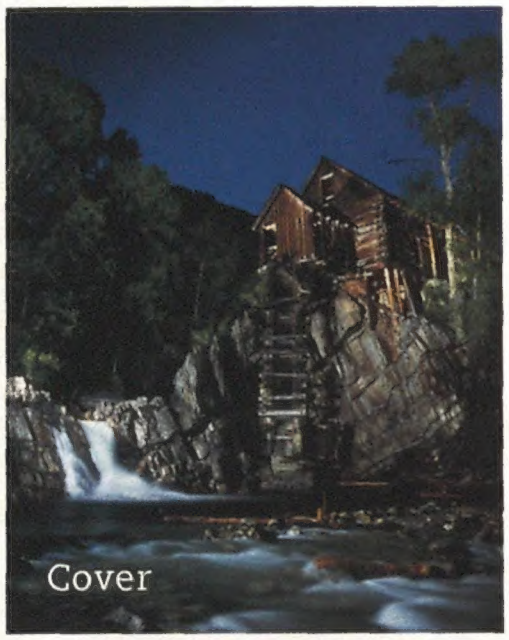


Cover

Cover The Sheep Mountain Tunnel Mill in Crystal, Colorado, is located in the Rocky Mountains southwest of Aspen. Supported by silver, lead and zinc mines, Crystal prospered in the 1880s and '90s, boasting a population of 400, and a hotel, stores, saloons and two newspapers. However, the area was often snowbound, buried under up to 50 feet of snow, which closed roads and made the town virtually impossible to sustain.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BERTHOLD STEINHILBER


22 Letters to the Editor

134 Additional Sources

135 Smithsonian Study Tours

14 A Note from the Secretary
An Uncommon Treasure-house
BY SECRETARY LAWRENCE M. SMALL

16 S. Dillon Ripley, 1913 - 2001

26 Around the Mall and Beyond
Executive Images
BY MICHAEL KERNAN

32 Points of Interest
Preacher on the Go
BY T. EDWARD NICKENS

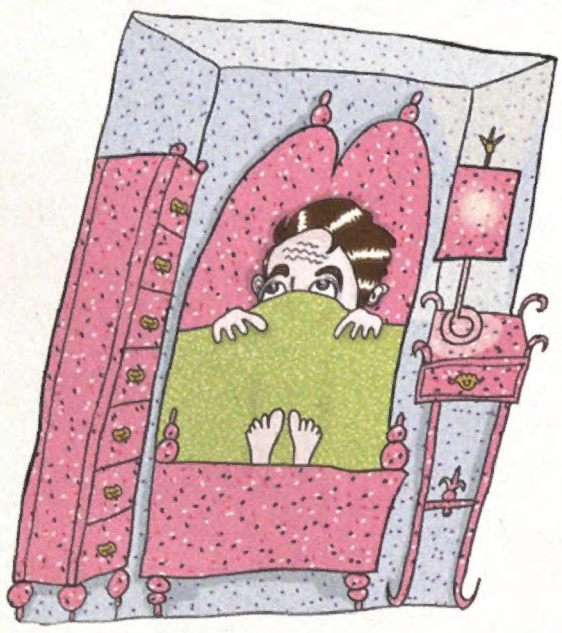
38 The Object at Hand
Aid in Small Boxes
BY CAROLYN HUGHES CROWLEY

42 Smithsonian Highlights
A Soldier Artist on the Plains
**Highlights Calendar** starts on page 44

132 Book Reviews
*Uphill with Archie: A Son's Journey* by William H. MacLeish

136 The Last Page
Bedtime Horrors
BY LARRY WALLBERG

26



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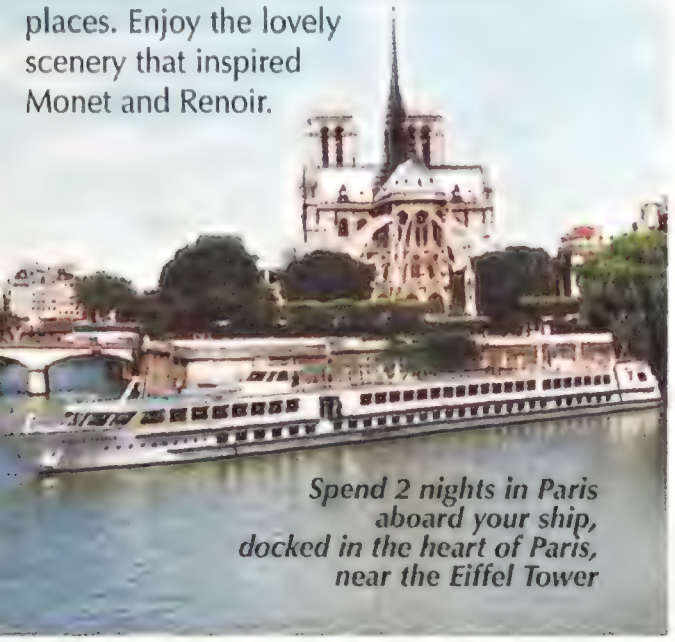

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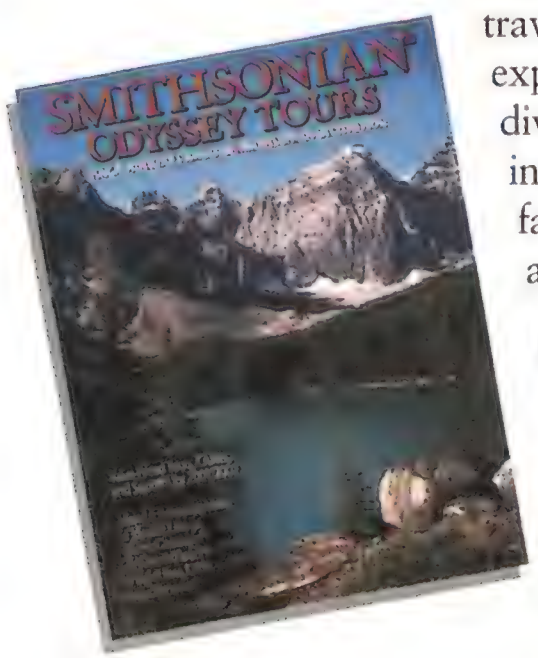
*Inset: Smithsonian Associates in Athens, Greece learn about the Acropolis from study leader Bill Hottell*

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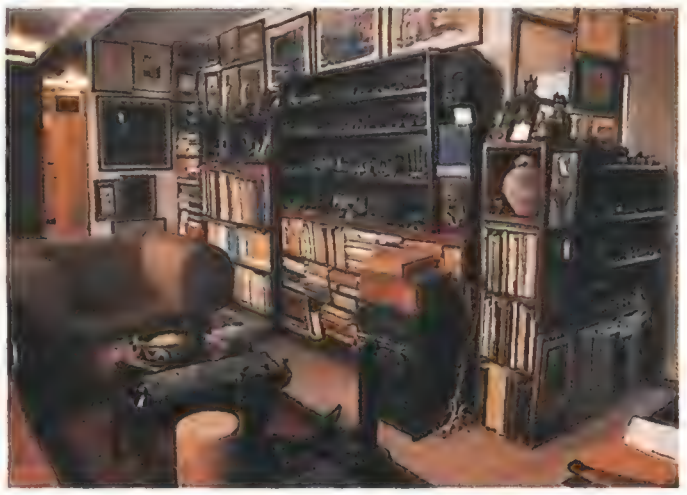
# An Uncommon Treasure-house

## A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

FOR DECADES, A TWO-BEDROOM APARTMENT IN Summit, New Jersey, was home to one of the most distinguished private collections of Chinese art in America. Dr. Paul Singer assembled the collection over a long lifetime (he lived from 1904 to 1997), and he kept it not in the splendor of a mansion or gallery or museum but in the plainest of circumstances: within the confines of the apartment he shared with his wife, Eva, in a reddish-brick, mid-20th-century-American apartment house of the sort architectural critics can't even be bothered to disdain. But behind that ordinary brick, what uncommon treasure!

To say that the doctor's collection claimed every inch of the apartment is an exaggeration—but barely. Thomas Lawton, a senior research associate at the Smithsonian's Sackler Gallery, visited the apartment often and acknowledges that there were, in fact, pathways through the astonishing accumulation. But they were negotiated at some risk. After his wife died, Singer surrendered even their bedroom to the collection. The balance shifted: the collector no longer made room for the collection; the collection begrudged space to him. For the remaining two decades of his life, Singer slept on a sofa bed—left unopened because the extension would have claimed that much more space.



Chinese art filled every available space in collector Paul Singer's New Jersey apartment.

Bookcases and shelves lined the walls of Singer's apartment and jutted into the arm of a sofa or threatened to block a closet door. The cases and shelves, bought as needed, didn't match, and that didn't matter. What mattered to Singer were the objects several rows deep that crowded those shelves. By the end of his life, he had acquired more than 5,000 such objects, spectacular evidence of Chinese civilization's creativity over five millennia—swords, mirrors, bowls, boxes, trays, hooks, pieces of sculpture and pieces of jewelry, objects that were made to be used and objects that were made to be admired, in wood, bronze, glass, jade, lacquer, ivory, bone, amber and silver. And no matter their number or density, Singer always knew the precise location of every item that shared his home.

Singer was born in Hungary but grew up in Vienna, Austria, where he attended medical school. Chinese art captured his fancy in the 1920s and never relaxed its hold on him. (The first Far Eastern object he bought, at the age of 17, a bronze image of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, was on his desk 75 years later.) He and Eva fled from the Nazis to America in 1939, and he worked as a doctor in this country. No amateur or haphazard buyer, he built his collection with a scholar's assurance and a connoisseur's eye.

Through his friendship with Arthur M. Sackler, another collector with an Asian passion, Singer in the late 1960s began to receive money each year from Sackler's foundation to enlarge the collection—on condition that it be left to the foundation at Singer's death. So the shelves in Summit grew ever more full. After Singer died, the remarkable trove came to the Smithsonian's Sackler Gallery thanks to the splendid generosity of the Sacklers. A joint gift of the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation, Paul Singer, the AMS Foundation for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities, and the Children of Arthur M. Sackler, the collection is now being readied for an exhibition in the 100th anniversary year of the doctor's birth.

Singer was healthy until a month before his death. He spent that last month in a hospital and nursing home—during which time some 162 Chinese objects we can identify, and perhaps many more, disappeared from the unattended apartment in Summit. To this day, the objects have not been found, and the Smithsonian has issued a brochure—a kind of wanted poster—with pictures of 40 of the missing items. To the mystery of the objects' past, their disappearance adds fresh mystery. The loss to the public is indeed regrettable. But how thrilled audiences will be by the vast store that remains, for the doctor chose well all those years. The gorgeous clutter from his plain shelves is valued today at more than $60 million. And its cultural worth? That's beyond calculation.

LAWRENCE M. SMALL, SECRETARY

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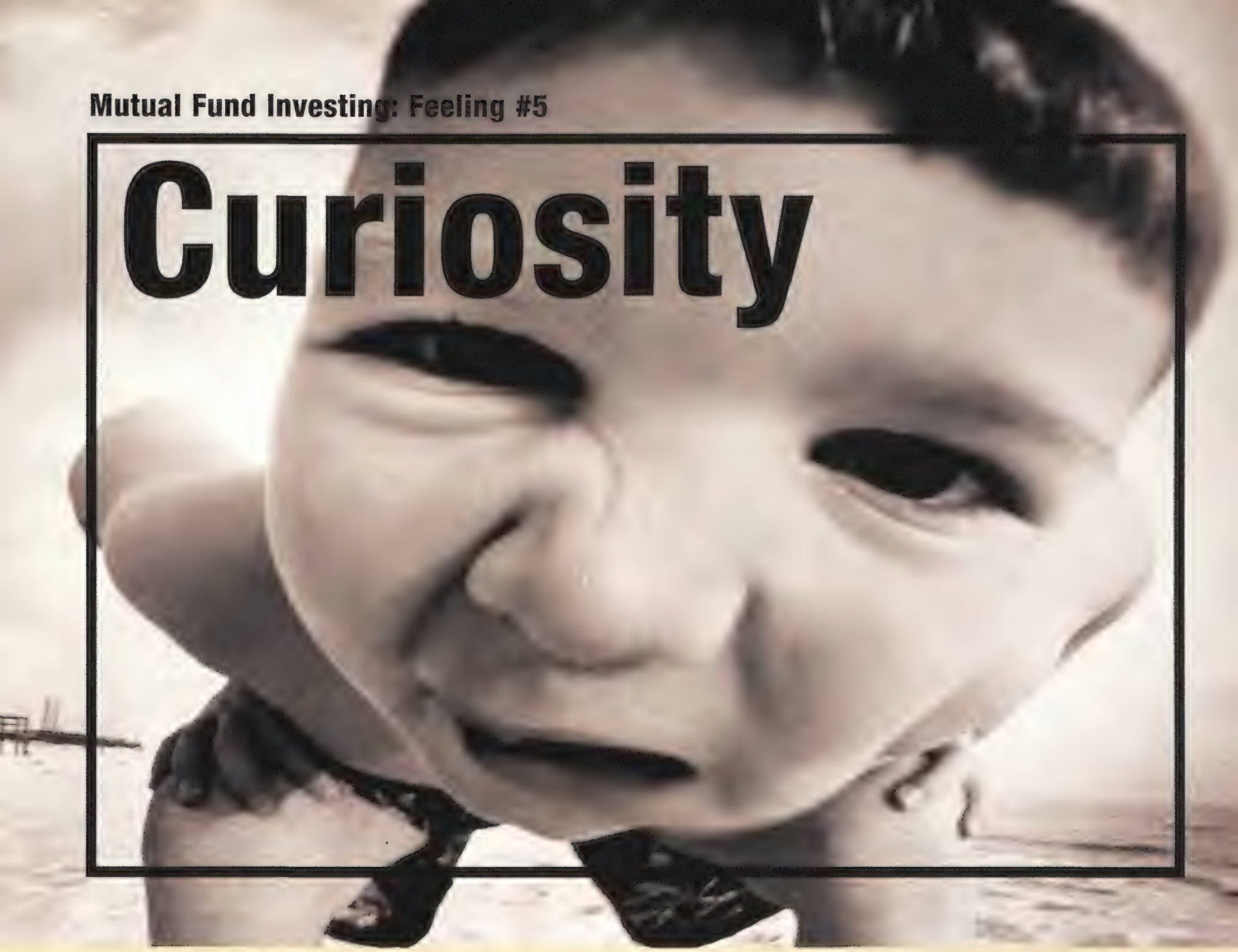
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# S. Dillon Ripley

1913 - 2001

S. DILLON RIPLEY, THE SECRETARY OF the Smithsonian Institution from 1964 to 1984, died in March at the age of 87. He created this magazine.

He was patrician but with a common touch, an urbane man who was right at home slogging through the jungles of New Guinea and India. When he took over the Smithsonian, he was determined to change the image of the place as a dusty attic populated solely by researchers counting beetles. He wanted to let in the air. He wanted to take this great scholarly complex to the people.

As part of that effort, he wanted to have a magazine aimed at a large general audience, a magazine that would cover all those subject areas that were of interest to the Institution. He proceeded to do so at considerable personal risk. There was little money for a start-up; general interest magazines had been dying left and right; and many people thought he was daft for even trying such a harebrained scheme. But Ripley prevailed. He hired Edward K. Thompson, a legendary editor of *Life* magazine, and SMITHSONIAN was off and running.

Ripley had a particular fondness for his creation. Each month he liked to come to the layout room—in part perhaps to play hooky from the pressures of his office—to look at color proofs of the next issue and schmooze with the staff. When he saw or heard something that pleased him, his face would light up with an impish smile.

In some ways he seemed a man of the 19th century. His office was filled with Victorian furnishings, and his speech on occasion reflected another time—when he felt he needed to get busy, he was apt to say: "I'll have to stir my stumps." Yet his compass always pointed toward the future.

Dillon Ripley was born to privilege. As a youth he went to private schools and traveled widely in Europe and India. After graduating from Yale, he studied zoology at Columbia. At 23, he jumped at the chance to participate in an expedition to New Guinea, where he spent 18 months in the jungle collecting bird specimens.

Birds were always Ripley's first love. At age 17, to attract waterfowl, he built a duck pond at the family estate in Connecticut. The pond, with its rafts of ducks and geese, would remain a focus of his life from then on. Ultimately, he would choose ornithology as his scientific field.

During World War II he joined the Office of Strategic Services, coordinating U.S. and British intelligence efforts in Southeast Asia. Once he was airlifted into a Thai jungle to meet with the king's regent. He jumped from the plane with a machine gun in his hands and a tuxedo in his backpack. It's a role he would have played with relish.

After the war he taught at Yale, and was serving as director of the Peabody Museum of Natural History when he was tapped to take over the Smithsonian. He decided from the beginning that he wanted the staid old place to become a destination where people could not only learn but have fun doing it. He made it kid-friendly by installing a carousel on the Mall and setting up a life-size fiberglass triceratops named Uncle Beazley in front of the Natural History Building so that the youngsters could play on its back. He inaugurated the very popular Folklife Festival with singing and dancing and arts and crafts from cultures around the nation and the world.

He generated a flurry of new initiatives, new programs, new museums. During his term, Harvard and the Smithsonian created the Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He started, revamped or completed the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the Renwick Gallery, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the National Museum of African Art, the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, the Anacostia Museum, the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, and the National Air and Space Museum. He established new ecological research centers in Florida and Maryland.

He was a man who enjoyed his life and work to the fullest. I recall a summer afternoon at his house in western Connecticut. He was sitting on the patio, drinking a glass of wine and looking out over the pond he built so long ago at his beloved ducks and geese. A pair of Cochin bantam hens swirled around his feet like windup toys. A man at ease. And there it was—that impish smile. *—Don Moser*

RICHARD HOWARD

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## How will you take care of your high cholesterol and heart disease?

I've always loved to dance. So I was thrilled when my oldest grandson wanted to follow in my footsteps. But before our first lesson, I had a heart attack. I needed to lower my cholesterol. Diet and exercise didn't do it—my cholesterol was still too high. So I asked my doctor about adding ZOCOR.

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**Important considerations:** ZOCOR is a prescription medicine and isn't right for everyone, including women who are nursing or pregnant or who may become pregnant, anyone with liver problems, and people who are allergic to any ingredients of ZOCOR. Unexplained muscle pain or weakness could be a sign of a rare but serious side effect and should be reported to your doctor right away. Your doctor may do blood tests before and during treatment with ZOCOR to check for liver problems. To avoid serious side effects, discuss with your doctor medicine or food you should avoid while on ZOCOR (see details immediately following this ad).

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Please read the additional information on ZOCOR immediately following this ad. Your results may vary.
[1]42% reduction based on 111/2,221 (ZOCOR) vs 189/2,223 (placebo).

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# ZOCOR®
## (SIMVASTATIN)

**PLEASE READ THIS SUMMARY CAREFULLY, AND THEN ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT ZOCOR. NO ADVERTISEMENT CAN PROVIDE ALL THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO PRESCRIBE A DRUG. THIS ADVERTISEMENT DOES NOT TAKE THE PLACE OF CAREFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR DOCTOR. ONLY YOUR DOCTOR HAS THE TRAINING TO WEIGH THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF A PRESCRIPTION DRUG FOR YOU.**

### USES OF ZOCOR

ZOCOR is a prescription drug that is indicated as an addition to diet for many patients with high cholesterol when diet and exercise are inadequate. For patients with coronary heart disease (CHD) and high cholesterol, ZOCOR is indicated as an addition to diet to reduce the risk of death by reducing coronary death; to reduce the risk of heart attack; to reduce the risk for undergoing cardiac procedures (coronary artery bypass grafting and percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty); and to reduce the risk of stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA).

### WHEN ZOCOR SHOULD NOT BE USED

Some people should not take ZOCOR. Discuss this with your doctor.

ZOCOR should not be used by patients who are allergic to any of its ingredients. In addition to the active ingredient simvastatin, each tablet contains the following inactive ingredients: cellulose, lactose, magnesium stearate, iron oxides, talc, titanium dioxide, and starch. Butylated hydroxyanisole is added as a preservative.

**Patients with liver problems:** ZOCOR should not be used by patients with active liver disease or repeated blood test results indicating possible liver problems. (See WARNINGS.)

**Women who are or may become pregnant:** Pregnant women should not take ZOCOR because it may harm the fetus. **Women of childbearing age should not take ZOCOR unless it is highly unlikely that they will become pregnant.** If a woman does become pregnant while on ZOCOR, she should stop taking the drug and talk to her doctor at once.

**Women who are breast-feeding** should not take ZOCOR.

### WARNINGS

**Muscle: Tell your doctor right away if you experience any unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness at any time during treatment with ZOCOR so your doctor can decide if ZOCOR should be stopped. Some patients may have muscle pain or weakness while taking ZOCOR. Rarely, this can include muscle breakdown resulting in kidney damage. The risk of muscle breakdown is greater in patients taking certain other drugs along with ZOCOR, such as the lipid-lowering drug Lopid (gemfibrozil), and other fibrates; lipid-lowering doses of niacin (nicotinic acid); Sandimmune (cyclosporine); itraconazole, ketoconazole, and other azole antifungal drugs; the antibiotics erythromycin and clarithromycin; HIV protease inhibitors; the antidepressant nefazodone; and the calcium channel blocker verapamil. Interruption of therapy with ZOCOR should be considered if you are going to take an azole antifungal medication, such as itraconazole, or macrolide antibiotics, such as erythromycin. Avoid drinking large quantities of grapefruit juice (more than one quart daily) while on ZOCOR. The risk of muscle breakdown is greater in patients with kidney problems or diabetes.**

**Because there are risks in combining therapy with ZOCOR with the products listed above, your doctor should carefully weigh the potential benefits and risks. He or she should also carefully monitor patients for any muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, particularly during the initial months of therapy and if the dose of either drug is increased. Your doctor also may monitor the level of certain muscle enzymes in your body, but there is no assurance that such monitoring will prevent the occurrence of severe muscle disease.**

**If you have conditions that can increase your risk of muscle breakdown, which in turn can cause kidney damage, your doctor should temporarily withhold or stop ZOCOR. Also, since there are no known adverse consequences of briefly stopping therapy with ZOCOR, treatment should be stopped a few days before elective major surgery and when any major acute medical or surgical condition occurs. Discuss this with your doctor, who can explain these conditions to you.**

**Liver: About 1% of patients who took ZOCOR in clinical trials developed elevated levels of some liver enzymes.** Patients who had these increases usually had no symptoms. Elevated liver enzymes usually returned to normal levels when therapy with ZOCOR was stopped.

In the ZOCOR Survival Study, the number of patients with more than one liver enzyme level elevation to greater than 3 times the normal upper limit was no different between the ZOCOR and placebo groups. Only 8 patients on ZOCOR and 5 on placebo discontinued therapy due to elevated liver enzyme levels. Patients were started on 20 mg of ZOCOR, and one third had their dose raised to 40 mg.

**Your doctor should perform routine blood tests to check these enzymes before you start treatment with ZOCOR and periodically thereafter (for example, semiannually) for your first year of treatment or until 1 year after your last elevation in dose. Patients titrated to the 80-mg dose should receive an additional test at 3 months.** If your enzyme levels increase, your doctor should order more frequent tests. If your liver enzyme levels remain unusually high, your doctor should discontinue your medication.

Tell your doctor about any liver disease you may have had in the past and about how much alcohol you consume. ZOCOR should be used with caution in patients who consume large amounts of alcohol.

### PRECAUTIONS

Before starting treatment with ZOCOR, try to lower your cholesterol by other methods such as diet, exercise, and weight loss. Ask your doctor about how best to do this. Any other medical problems that can cause high cholesterol should also be treated.

**Drug Interactions:** Because of possible serious drug interactions, it is important to tell your doctor what other drugs you are taking, including those obtained without a prescription.

ZOCOR® (simvastatin) can interact with cyclosporine (Sandimmune), itraconazole, ketoconazole, gemfibrozil, niacin, erythromycin, clarithromycin, HIV protease inhibitors, nefazodone, and verapamil.

To avoid possible serious side effects, avoid drinking large quantities of grapefruit juice (more than one quart daily) while on ZOCOR. (See WARNINGS, Muscle.)

Some patients taking lipid-lowering agents similar to ZOCOR and coumarin anticoagulants (a type of blood thinner) have experienced bleeding and/or increased blood clotting time. Patients taking these medicines should have their blood tested before starting therapy with ZOCOR and should continue to be monitored.

**Central Nervous System Toxicity; Cancer, Mutations, Impairment of Fertility:** Like most prescription drugs, ZOCOR was required to be tested on animals before it was marketed for human use. Often these tests were designed to achieve higher drug concentrations than humans achieve at recommended dosing. In some tests, the animals had damage to the nerves in the central nervous system. In studies of mice with high doses of ZOCOR, the likelihood of certain types of cancerous tumors increased. No evidence of mutations of or damage to genetic material has been seen. In one study with ZOCOR, there was decreased fertility in male rats.

**Pregnancy:** Pregnant women should not take ZOCOR because it may harm the fetus.

Safety in pregnancy has not been established. In studies with lipid-lowering agents similar to ZOCOR, there have been rare reports of birth defects of the skeleton and digestive system. Therefore, women of childbearing age should not take ZOCOR unless it is highly unlikely they will become pregnant. If a woman does become pregnant while taking ZOCOR, she should stop taking the drug and talk to her doctor at once. The active ingredient of ZOCOR did not cause birth defects in rats at 3 times the human dose or in rabbits at 3 times the human dose.

**Nursing Mothers:** Drugs taken by nursing mothers may be present in their breast milk. Because of the potential for serious adverse reactions in nursing infants, a woman taking ZOCOR should not breast-feed. (See WHEN ZOCOR SHOULD NOT BE USED.)

**Pediatric Use:** ZOCOR is not recommended for children or patients under 20 years of age.

### SIDE EFFECTS

Most patients tolerate treatment with ZOCOR well; however, like all prescription drugs, ZOCOR can cause side effects, and some of them can be serious. Side effects that do occur are usually mild and short-lived. Only your doctor can weigh the risks versus the benefits of any prescription drug. In clinical studies with ZOCOR, less than 1.5% of patients dropped out of the studies because of side effects. In a large, long-term study, patients taking ZOCOR experienced similar side effects to those patients taking placebo (sugar pills). Some of the side effects that have been reported with ZOCOR or related drugs are listed below. This list is not complete. Be sure to ask your doctor about side effects before taking ZOCOR and to discuss any side effects that occur.

**Digestive System:** Constipation, diarrhea, upset stomach, gas, heartburn, stomach pain/cramps, anorexia, loss of appetite, nausea, inflammation of the pancreas, hepatitis, jaundice, fatty changes in the liver, and, rarely, severe liver damage and failure, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

**Muscle, Skeletal:** Muscle cramps, aches, pain, and weakness; joint pain; muscle breakdown.

**Nervous System:** Dizziness, headache, insomnia, tingling, memory loss, damage to nerves causing weakness and/or loss of sensation and/or abnormal sensations, anxiety, depression, tremor, loss of balance, psychic disturbances.

**Skin:** Rash, itching, hair loss, dryness, nodules, discoloration.

**Eye/Senses:** Blurred vision, altered taste sensation, progression of cataracts, eye muscle weakness.

**Hypersensitivity (Allergic) Reactions:** On rare occasions, a wide variety of symptoms have been reported to occur either alone or together in groups (referred to as a syndrome) that appeared to be based on allergic-type reactions, which may rarely be fatal. These have included one or more of the following: a severe generalized reaction that may include shortness of breath, wheezing, digestive symptoms, and low blood pressure and even shock; an allergic reaction with swelling of the face, lips, tongue and/or throat with difficulty swallowing or breathing; symptoms mimicking lupus (a disorder in which a person's immune system may attack parts of his or her own body); severe muscle and blood vessel inflammation, sometimes including rash; bruises; various disorders of blood cells (that could result in anemia, infection, or blood clotting problems) or abnormal blood tests; inflamed or painful joints; hives; fatigue and weakness; sensitivity to sunlight; fever, chills; flushing; difficulty breathing; and severe skin disorders that vary from rash to a serious burn-like shedding of skin all over the body, including mucous membranes such as the lining of the mouth.

**Other:** Loss of sexual desire, breast enlargement, impotence.

**Laboratory Tests:** Liver function test abnormalities including elevated alkaline phosphatase and bilirubin; thyroid function abnormalities.

**NOTE: This summary provides important information about ZOCOR. If you would like more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the complete prescribing information and then discuss it with them.**

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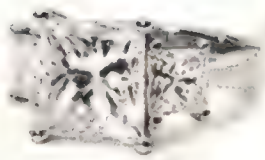

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### PAINT BY NUMBERS

WILLIAM L. BIRD, JR.'S ARTICLE "YOU, Too, Can Be a Rembrandt," in the March 2001 issue, took me back to 1952 and the Cold War. I was on a U.S. Air Force C-124 transport, flying many long hours, packed in with a cargo of spare engines and boxes, toward "Bluejay Rich," the code name for our secret destination. We landed smartly, and a sign greeted us: "Welcome to Thule."

As a civil engineer, I went through different processing lines from the servicemen entering Thule, Greenland. At every checkpoint I was asked whether I had come from New York. After replying I had, each person then asked what sounded like, "Got any fourteen?" Not knowing what was meant by this strange request, I just said no.

Later I pondered these exchanges. Since hard liquor was tacitly forbidden among the hundreds of civilian workers, perhaps they were looking for "7 & 7"—i.e., Seagram's and 7-Up—which added up to 14. Was 14 a code? No, officers and enlisted types had also entreated me.

Later, at the officers' club, the barman asked whether, by any chance, I had come from New York and did I "have any fourteen?" And then I saw them: paint-by-numbers efforts hanging on a well-lighted wall. Every one of them had at least one white area, delineated by a dark outline, with the numeral 14 in its center. The manufacturer of the kits in New York had left out the color for No. 14 from a large shipment and had promised to replace it. Meanwhile, Thule waited.

*Robert O. Noyer*
*Winchester, Virginia*

### TARZAN

YOU WROTE THAT TARZAN'S CREATOR, Edgar Rice Burroughs, covered the Battle of Tarawa in 1944. The battle commenced on November 20, 1943.

*John C. Nucci*
*Lynbrook, New York*

**The U.S. Marines captured and secured the atoll in November 1943. Burroughs reported on the aftermath of the three-day battle. Ed.**

### NOISE BUSTERS

AS A PROFESSIONAL WRITER OF COPYrighted epigrams, I was delighted to find one of them ("There are worse things than noise—but I can't think of any, because of all the noise.") on a bulletin board in the opening picture of your article.

*Ashleigh Brilliant*
*Santa Barbara, California*

### USS BATFISH

WHEN I OPENED MY MARCH ISSUE, "Run Silent, Run Deep" jumped out at me in huge print to headline Thomas B. Allen's fine article about the submarine USS *Batfish*. I was surprised, however, that although the article used my title, it made no reference to my novel of that name.

Several friends reported a CNN newscast citing Tom Allen as author of my novel. This may have intended to refer only to the magazine article, but it was easily misunderstood.

*Run Silent, Run Deep* is still very much alive. It has had dozens of printings, many editions, and has sold millions of copies worldwide. It was made into a movie, and is still one of the best-sellers in the U.S. Naval Institute's Naval Classics Series, which is now planning a 14th printing.

While I know I have no control over the use of my title, I do have proprietary and ethical feelings about *Run Silent, Run Deep*, book and title, which run pretty deep.

*Edward L. Beach*
*Washington, D.C.*

**Use of the title of Captain Beach's great tale of submarine warfare was intended as a**

compliment. We deeply regret that we failed to make this clear. Ed.

### ROBERT BURNS

I ENJOYED BROCK BROWER'S ARTICLE "His Heart Was in the Highlands," but one minor correction should be noted. In your sidebar of Robert Burns quotations, you attributed the verse, "An honest man's the noblest work of God," to Burns. Alexander Pope originally penned the verse in his *Essay on Man* of 1734. In his poem "The Cotter's Saturday Night" of 1785, Burns was quoting Pope.

*Alan R. Booth*
*International Burns Federation*
*Kilmarnock, Scotland*

THE STATUE OF ROBERT BURNS THAT you mentioned graces the lawn of the former Spaulding High School in Barre, Vermont, where my wife and I were students. The Vermont Historical Society recently purchased the school and its grounds, which will be the society's headquarters.

*Warner Shedd*
*East Calais, Vermont*

LEFT UNEXPLAINED IS WHY THIS UNtutored rural poet is still loved around the globe while other literary giants are merely respected for their great works. In his poem "Everything's Haggis in Hoboken," Ogden Nash may have said it best: "But of Robert Burns I'm a serious fan, / He wrote like an angel and lived like a man."

*James M. Montgomery*
*Atlanta, Georgia*

### WRITE TO SMITHSONIAN

Letters for consideration in this column must include your daytime telephone number, full name and postal address. Letters may be edited for clarity and length. **Our new address is Smithsonian Letters Editor, P.O. Box 50383, Washington, D.C. 20091-0383.** Send e-mail to LettersEd@simag.si.edu.


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AROUND THE MALL & BEYOND

# Executive Images

TO ASSEMBLE "THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY" EXHIBITION, EXPERTS SCOUR A TREASURE TROVE OF HISTORIC PICTURES

BY MICHAEL KERNAN

SOMETIMES OLD PHOTOGRAPHS hold their secrets for years.

A noted Civil War picture called "Confederate Dead on Matthews Hill" at Bull Run showed four dead soldiers in a forest clearing. But about 25 years ago a historian found another shot of the same four men in the same clearing. And they were alive. The "corpses," apparently, were staged.

Then there's the well-known picture of the crowd at Gettysburg for the dedication of the Civil War cemetery. A few decades ago someone examined it with a magnifying glass and discovered that it actually showed Abraham Lincoln, a tiny bareheaded figure, probably looking over the speech itself. This is the only image of him at Gettysburg that day.

Sometimes finding the old photographs themselves is an adventure. Laura Kreiss, a picture researcher for "The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden," the new permanent exhibition at the National Museum of American History, recalled her ordeal in trying to locate a picture of Presidential nominee William Jennings Bryan speaking to a group of loggers from a stump in 1896—literally, a stump speech.

"For days I turned the place upside down," Kreiss said. "It wasn't under 'Presidential Elections,' wasn't under 'Bryan,' or 'Campaigns.' I mentioned this to a staff member. It turns out it was in a file cabinet that had been moved to a temporary storage area." The photograph is now featured in the media section of the exhibition.

Finding the right pictures can be a lifework of frustration and triumph.

President Lyndon Johnson frequently started his day by reading several newspapers, eating breakfast and meeting with staff without leaving his White House bed.

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**Even while the Civil War raged in 1864, Abraham Lincoln made time for son Tad.**

The problems are obvious: Exactly how do you categorize a particular photograph and where do you file it? Many institutions and agencies don't have universal cataloging rules; how a picture is classified seems to depend mostly on the person filing it.

In Washington the search for photographs is a thriving business, for the city is up to here in old pictures.

"The Smithsonian alone has about six million photographs in various archives," said Kreiss, who worked on a massive inventory of the Institution's objects in the 1980s.

But a photo archive is a bit like the Egyptian desert—no one knows what ancient wonders it holds. It takes an expert to unearth these treasures. "You have to rely on good archivists who know their collections," said Kreiss, who has been freelancing for the Smithsonian for 20 years.

"You want, say, some farmers picking cotton in the 1940s. Which repository would have them? Well, probably several in Washington. I would check the Department of Agriculture, the Library of Congress, the National Archives and the Museum of American History. It can be very labor intensive, especially if you're trying to find the best photographs."

For "The American Presidency," Kreiss and colleagues Carrie Bruns, Shannon Perich and Sue Ostroff dug up some 400 photographs, engravings and lithographs to accompany a plethora of Presidential artifacts, such as the lap desk on which Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence, Lincoln's top hat, a bullet-pierced eyeglass case that saved Theodore Roosevelt's life when it deflected an assassin's bullet, a filing cabinet—its drawers crudely crowbarred open—from Richard Nixon's scandals, and even Warren Harding's monogrammed silk pajamas.

At the behest of Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence Small, the exhibition was put together in eight months; normally it would take at least three years. Fortunately, most of the 900 objects in the show were in the Smithsonian's legendary "attic." And about 80 percent of the photographs are from Smithsonian repositories.

A couple of hours poring over old photographs sounds like fun to me. Kreiss says you come across some great things you weren't looking for.

While she was scouring the National Archives on a project for the Women's Museum in Dallas, she turned up some 1920s photographs predicting what women would be wearing in 2000: "soft metal" dresses, frocks with built-in wings for flying, and electric coats.

Kreiss took me on a tour of "The American Presidency" to show me some of the photographic gems that bring the exhibition together. What fascinated me was the imaginative use made of some pictures. A shot of Harry Truman on a whistle-stop train tour was blown up to life-size and curved to look just like the real thing.

The original print of James Buchanan taking the oath of office outside the Capitol in 1857, the oldest known photograph of a Presidential inauguration, is here in a glass case. The print is very fragile and will be removed from the display and replaced by a durable modern copy.

I was equally taken with a grand indoor scene: an image of the old Pension Building, now the National Building Museum, all rigged out for

**On the stump in 1896, silver-tongued orator William Jennings Bryan makes the first of three bids for the Presidency; but he never succeeded in getting elected to the office.**

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Franklin Roosevelt and Fala, his popular Scottish terrier, enjoy a drive around the family's sprawling estate in Hyde Park, New York, in the fall of 1944.

William McKinley's inaugural ball in 1901. Equipped with electricity for the first time, the place is ablaze with strings and spirals of brilliant lights, making the enormous columns shine.

An alcove of the exhibition devoted to life in the White House is sure to please youngsters with its display of such personal items as an 1829 bisque doll belonging to John Quincy Adams' granddaughter, the elaborate dollhouses of Jimmy Carter's daughter, Amy, and Grover Cleveland's children, a découpaged paint box, pointe shoes and a chess set. The photographs accompanying this section enhance the domestic setting: there are pictures of Commanders in Chief cuddling their grandchildren, of Lincoln reading to his son Tad, and of children having a snowball fight on the White House lawn. And, of course, there's that charming picture of John Kennedy, Jr., playing under his father's desk.

"Many of these pictures are from Presidential libraries," Kreiss said. "The hardest to get were of Chelsea. The Clintons really protected her."

But apparently some Presidents are less concerned about their privacy: here also is a picture of Lyndon Johnson conducting a staff meeting from his bed, a habit of his, Kreiss said.

Occasionally, certain photographs prove to be elusive, even though everyone thinks they've seen them everywhere. "We needed a shot of Franklin Roosevelt with his dog Fala," Kreiss said. "Easy, we thought. But the National Archives didn't have one. We called the wire services. Nope. The Roosevelt Presidential Library had a picture but couldn't give us permission to use it. We finally found a copy at one of the big stock houses that lend commercially."

The long-sought-after photograph shows the Scottish terrier in the front seat of a convertible with FDR at the wheel (the President, disabled, used hand controls to drive).

One of the most compelling pictures is an enlargement of Ulysses S. Grant in his post-Presidency days. Suffering from throat cancer, he is shown swaddled in blankets, working feverishly on his memoirs, which he wanted to finish before his death, in order to support his wife.

Laura Kreiss has been finding photographs most of her life. "I have a master's degree in anthropology," she told me, "but I've been interested in photographs since I was a little girl. I got my first job working for the National Institutes of Health with a medical researcher who set up a film and a photographic archive at NIH."

A few years later, when Kreiss was working at the National Library of Medicine at NIH, Woody Allen's people called and wanted footage of mental institutions in the 1930s. "They were researching the film *Zelig*. I helped them find some film footage and got a credit in the movie. Boy, I thought, finding this stuff is so much more interesting than just storing films and putting numbers on things."

These days, Kreiss sticks to still pictures, usually from the Smithsonian or the Library of Congress, which she knows very well. No, she hasn't worked for Ken Burns, the movie documentarian, but she has done research for public television shows and museums across the country.

"A lot of things are on the Internet now," Kreiss said, "and there are several on-line catalogs, but usually they're just the tip of the iceberg of what each repository has." To find the best shots, she usually follows up with an actual visit to the repository.

"I love historical photographs. They're a window to the past," she said. "I have this unusual view of history: it's mostly visual. I know the image, but I'm not always sure of all the historical facts."

Despite failing health, Ulysses S. Grant works diligently on his memoirs.

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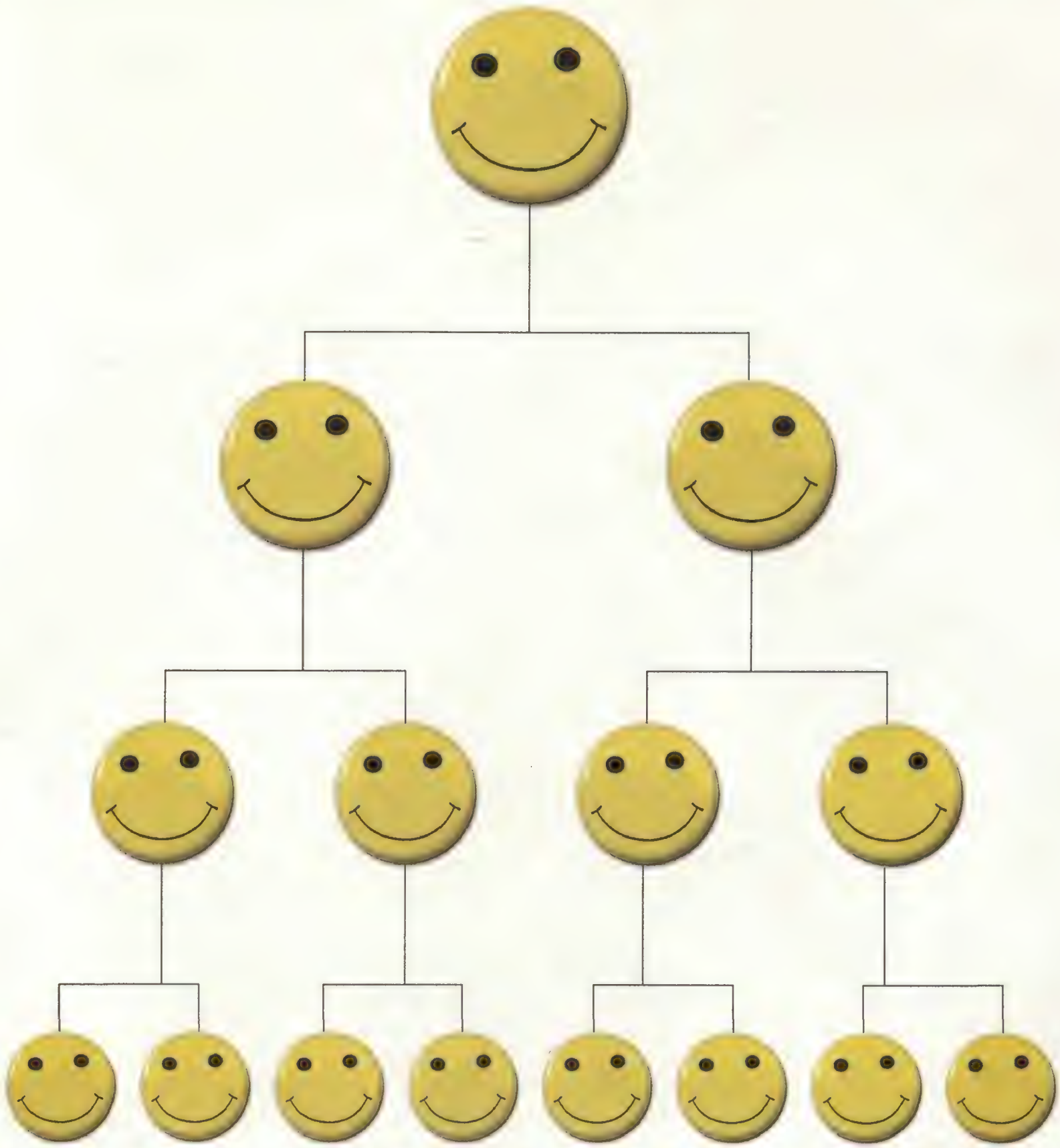

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POINTS OF INTEREST

# Preacher on the Go

TINY SMITH ISLAND HAS THREE CHURCHES BUT ONLY ONE PASTOR, WHO GETS AROUND BY BOAT AND GOLF CART

BY T. EDWARD NICKENS

Steadying himself on the deck of a crabber's workboat, Rick Edmund heads off to Tylerton from Ewell for a church dinner.

ALL: RICK KOZAK

"He just got that skiff," Sheila Bradshaw tells me, "and he's a-worryin' us to death." It is Sunday afternoon, and I'm sitting at the Bradshaw kitchen table in tiny Rhodes Point, on Smith Island in the Chesapeake Bay. Within reach is a king's feast: a small mountain of fried soft-shell crabs, bowls filled with collard greens and corn pudding, and an eight-layer banana cake. Sheila Bradshaw's husband, "Pal," is here, and so is Richard Edmund, the fellow who knits Sheila's brow each time he motors his small boat past her house and then doesn't come back when she thinks he should. "It gets dark, and we know he's out there somewhere," she says, reprimand and affection in her voice, "so we get on the VHF radio. 'Hey, Preacher-man, where are you?'"

Edmund glances over at me and grins. He is 52 years old, slight and trim, with graying temples and an impish, unlined face. He's been posted on Smith Island just 11 months. But I know what he's thinking. Never before has Rick Edmund been more aware of where he is.

Each Sunday morning, Edmund, a minister for the United Methodist Church, travels by golf cart and crab boat, in rain, shine or nor'easter, across Smith Island's 8,000 acres of marsh and tidal creek. One by one, he leads worship services at three small churches in the trio of remote ham-

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**Pastor Rick addresses his Rhodes Point congregation. He offers sermons at all three Smith Island churches on Sabbath Day.**

lets that hang on to the island's meager dry ground: Ewell, the largest community, and the terminus of the ferryboat from Crisfield, Maryland, 12 miles distant; Rhodes Point, connected to Ewell by a ribbon of blacktop strung across vast salt marsh; and tiny Tylerton, accessible only by boat.

In 1910, some 800 souls lived on Smith Island. Today, there are perhaps 350, and nearly every island family is involved in an industry handed down through the ages: crabbing. Along the marsh creeks that lace the island like a doily, wire crab pots tower in neat stacks two stories high. Scores of small wooden outbuildings called crab shanties teeter over the towns' waterfronts, linked together by long piers covered with waist-high basins where molting crabs are held while they shed their shells.

Although Smith Island is well-publicized as a day-trip destination, few visitors from the mainland get more than a cursory glimpse. "So, you found us," Rick Edmund had said a few days earlier as I stepped off the ferryboat. But I hadn't, not yet. All I knew was where to start looking, for there are two things that all Smith Islanders have in common: blue crabs and Pastor Rick. Only one of them would let me tag along.

At 8:30 on Sunday morning, I slip into a back pew at the church in Ewell. It has a white steeple and stained-glass windows. The half hour before each Sunday morning service is called testimony, or class meeting. A heavy-set man with an earnest smile pads up and down the aisles. He asks if there are concerns in the hearts of the congregation, or recent moments when the Almighty moved in their lives. He shuffles crab-wise along the pews to face each person who takes to his or her feet.

*I want to stand up and praise God this morning . . .*

*I want to stand up and thank the Lord this morning . . .*

*Ever'body here knows how worried I am about my arthritis. I need your prayers.*

In the early 19th century, a fiery Methodist preacher named Joshua Thomas made landfall here in his 20-foot log sailing canoe. Thomas' exhortations prompted women to leap from windows, as one account recalls, convinced that Satan himself was in hot pursuit. Methodism's emphasis on God's availability to common folk appealed to the Chesapeake's farmers and fishermen and is still an anchor for many Smith Islanders today.

This morning, Pastor Rick is preaching on 1 Corinthians 12, a New Testament passage that speaks of diversity and unity within a community of believers. "What a beautiful illustration the apostle Paul gives us here," he says to the congregation at Ewell. It's a short sermon, but he'll deliver it three times. He reads from the Bible: "The body is a unit. Though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ."

And so it is with Smith Island.

A half hour later it is "breezin' up," as the islanders say, and Edmund and I hunker down in his golf cart, a howling wind rattling vinyl windows. We careen past Ewell's trim frame houses, then clear a wall of tall marsh grass. In an instant, the world turns to reeds, water and sky. At a crabber's dock in Rhodes Point, we board Ronnie Corbin's 40-foot workboat, the *Patty Ann*, its diesel engine already growling. Corbin takes Edmund to Tylerton on Sabbath Day because the pastor has such a tight schedule, and he can ride in the *Patty Ann*'s cabin, where his going-to-church suit won't get messed up.

Edmund entered the ministry late in life, after 20 years as a computer programmer, and served at three small mainland churches until he was appointed to fill the opening at Smith Island. "I knew the minister here would be involved at a higher level of community activity," he says, watching the boat's wake as we thread the marsh creeks that stitch Tylerton to the rest of Smith Island. Day and night, his golf cart whirs up and down the road between

**En route to his second service, Edmund stops the golf cart to drop off a stack of church bulletins for his third service.**

Ewell and Rhodes Point. And the little skiff he uses to get to Tylerton during the week rarely sits idle for long. "A lot of this is just making the commitment. After all, we're on an island. You've all got to work together."

Pinched between Tyler Creek and Merlin Gut, Tylerton is an island itself, four dozen frame houses on narrow, shaded footpaths. It's dollhouse cute, and just as fragile. I scramble out of the boat, scuffing Sunday shoes on a wooden piling, and notice a long rotting bulkhead that hugs the waterfront. It sports only inches of freeboard. "You should be here when there's a nor'easter coming," Edmund says. "The water covers the whole bulkhead."

Smith Island faces many challenges: youth siphoned off by the mainland. The elderly lost to death or distant nursing homes. And crab harvests at an all-time low. But the Bay itself may prove to be the island's ultimate undoing. Smith Island is eroding; more than 1,200 island acres have disappeared in the past century. Eventually, it may suffer the same fate as other Bay islands, which were once inhabited but have long since disappeared.

In this grim context, Edmund's message seems apt. Up on the dais at Tylerton's church, Pastor Rick wears an alb and stole, a departure from his typical coat and tie. He senses the congregation's curiosity. "I don't normally wear my alb unless we have a baptism, or some other special event," he explains. "And today we do. This is a special service, for this is the day we commission our lay volunteers."

I glance at the church bulletin. Inside is a listing of volunteer church positions—Sunday School superintendent, youth committee, financial secretary and more. "Apostle Paul had the idea in mind that everyone has gifts," Pastor Rick explains. "We have different skills, different talents, that God has blessed us with." Edmund reads, again, the day's passage from 1 Corinthians. When he asks all the church volunteers to come forward, the floorboards grumble. For a moment I wonder if the service has concluded, for I'm left in the pews with only scattered adults and a few young people slouched in the back rows. More than half of the congregation has agreed to take on one leadership role or another. Pastor Rick is beaming.

It is noon by the time we reach Rhodes Point, and the congregation is already seated. As we hustle up the steps, my eyes are drawn to flowers on the fresh grave of Leon Marsh, the last of Rhodes Point's builders of wooden boats. His was the third funeral service Edmund has led here. Another two residents recently moved to mainland nursing homes. "That's 10 percent of the population, gone since I arrived," Edmund told me. Its parts are many, I recalled. But not as many as before.

Pastor Rick is running out of gas. From the pulpit, he asks for a cup of water, and a young girl slips him a clear glass jar, full to overflowing. In Joshua Thomas' day, colorful nicknames accompanied the most exuberant preachers, and they were a stern lot: "Son of Thunder" and "Devil Driver." Edmund is different. "We all have gifts," he tells his congregation. "I'm comfortable with preaching, but I think I am best with people. Out there with you."

After this last service, Edmund and I walk a short distance to a house where wire crab pots take up much of the front yard. Sheila Bradshaw already has lunch on the table, and soon I'm into my third helping of crabs and howling over Pal's rendition of Edmund winning 250 pounds of frozen bait at the recent waterman's banquet—the only man on Smith Island with no use for it whatsoever. It's not long before the conversation turns to the island's rapidly receding shoreline.

**Braving the elements, Edmund bounces down the road between Ewell and Rhodes Point, which is often inundated by high tides.**

"I'll tell you, I don't worry about the erosion too much," Pal Bradshaw says. He is a big man, with a quick smile beneath a salt-and-pepper mustache. He points out a window, across the creek toward a thin strip of marsh, beyond which the open Chesapeake rolls to the horizon. When it goes? "Won't be nothing between us and the Bay," he says, matter-of-factly. "But if you ain't got young people and you ain't got crabs, then the island's gone anyways."

*One body, many parts.*

Earlier, on the ride over to Rhodes Point in the golf cart, Edmund had stomped on the brakes, pulled off the road and photographed a heron. He told me that sometimes at night, on his walks around town, he passes the Ewell church and stops for a moment, thinking about his favorite stained-glass window there. It pictures a large fortress clinging to a spire of rock. Massive waves thunder into the cliffs, and foam nearly reaches the stronghold. "It's called 'A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,'" he said, "and I think, 'Wow . . . that's Smith Island.'" Then he steered the golf cart back on the road, heading, as always, for high ground.

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BY CAROLYN HUGHES CROWLEY

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ONE DAY DURING THE TWO-YEAR, post-World War II captivity of Klaus Pütter, a German POW-soldier in a French hospital, a plain, brown, 22-pound cardboard box arrived—a gift from CARE (an acronym for Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe), containing about 40,000 calories from Germany's recent enemy, the United States.

It held corned beef, bacon, liver loaf, margarine, lard, apricot preserves, honey, raisins, chocolate, sugar, egg powder, milk powder, coffee, flour and soap.

"Even though hunger and desperation were with us, our first reaction was, 'What's the snag? What do the Americans want to do to us now?'" Pütter says.

Never getting enough to eat—daily, only a piece of bread, cheese, cabbage soup and tea ("Never enough, believe me," Pütter says)—the German prisoners nevertheless debated three days about what to do with the box.

Finally, the German Army chaplain concluded, "Americans are different. They help people in need, regardless of who and where they are."

Celebrating CARE's 50th anniversary in 1996, the organization presented the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History with a 1962 cardboard CARE package. It contains boxes of macaroni, cornmeal, instant chocolate-flavored drink mix and nonfat dried milk.

CARE, one of the largest nonsectarian, nongovernment organizations in the world working in international development and relief, started an emergency food relief program in 1946, just after the end of World War II. During the Berlin Airlift beginning

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in 1948, Americans purchased and sent $10 packages containing food, clothing and medicine to West Berlin in one of the largest person-to-person relief efforts in history.

Berliners looked to the sky for help after Soviet leader Joseph Stalin ordered a shutdown of ground traffic to and from their city of a couple of million residents. From 1946 to 1949, CARE delivered more than 658,000 packages there, including 200,000 during the airlift.

The first packages' contents came from surplus Army rations, which the United States had stored for the invasion of Japan. When Europeans depleted those rations, CARE began sending packages it designed for civilian families, containing more meats and more fats. Criticism soon followed.

The French groused that the contents did not lend themselves to the French cuisine. The Irish insisted on a substitute for the meat products. The British wanted fruit juices and extra fats instead of flour, which was not in short supply.

So CARE began customizing. People could then send Asian packages (with beans, miso and soybean oil), kosher (food sanctioned by Jewish law), and Italian and Greek (with spaghetti and assorted spices). Baby and infant packages were available, as was even a holiday package with a turkey in a can. CARE developed an enviable reputation for reputable delivery. Methods have included reindeer in Finland, camels in Pakistan and elephants in Sri Lanka, as well as more orthodox vehicles.

In the late 1940s CARE introduced packages with tool kits and sewing machines to help people earn incomes and become self-sufficient. In the 1950s CARE sent farm tools to Europe and Asia. It also sent medical equipment and books to many developing countries. In 1966 CARE began phasing out its by then famous packages, although it revives the tradition sometimes, as it did in Bosnia in the 1990s.

*The French groused that the contents did not lend themselves to the French cuisine.*

In the 1970s CARE helped communities build wells and improve sanitation. In the 1980s it launched primary health care programs, such as oral rehydration therapy for diarrhea victims. Beginning in 1990, CARE has provided family planning services in almost 300 clinics.

Since 1998 CARE has provided shelter and repair materials, helped farmers restore their fields to productivity and assisted with mine awareness and removal programs in Kosovo. CARE managed eight refugee camps in Macedonia, housing 100,000 refugees. It has distributed 80,000 blankets, 40,000 mattresses, 11,000 plastic sheets, 1,000 stoves and 6,500 kitchen sets.

Most recently, CARE has changed its name to Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere and no longer draws only from its American roots. Nine other industrialized countries have founded CAREs under the confederation of CARE International, a global movement reaching 68 developing countries.

Criteria for determining CARE's presence in countries include per capita gross national product, infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births, death rate of children between ages 1 and 4, life expectancy at birth, nutrition status of vulnerable groups, percentage of population with access to safe water, and literacy and unemployment rates.

The term "CARE Package" is a registered trademark, and the organization frowns on its corporate use. However, CARE packages have become a cultural icon, a symbol of generosity worldwide, and a part of the American vernacular. College students receive "care packages" from home during exams, and children at camps dive into "care packages" of brownies their moms have sent.

A 1962 note accompanying the Smithsonian's package sums it up well: "It is the hope of all Americans everywhere that our efforts of sharing our bountiful food supply will be an encouragement to free people all over the world."

**At a post-World War II distribution center in Germany, people line up to receive CARE packages from volunteer relief workers.**

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*Indians in Council*

# A Soldier Artist on the Plains

SMITHSONIAN HIGHLIGHTS

EVEN BEFORE COMPLETING *INDIANS IN Council* in 1850, Seth Eastman was the foremost 19th-century chronicler of Dakota (Sioux) life. Having come to Fort Snelling, in what is now Minnesota, as a career Army officer, Eastman began sketching scenes of Dakota daily events. Those ethnographically invaluable drawings formed the basis for watercolors—including this painting—used to illustrate a monumental 1851 treatise on Indian tribes.

"Seth Eastman Watercolors: A Soldier Artist Among the Dakota," now showing through October 7 at the National Museum of the American Indian's George Gustav Heye Center, in New York City, brings together 56 Eastman watercolors mainly intended for that 1851 work. With detailed interpretation of fishing, maple sugaring, hunting and ceremonies, Eastman's paintings have become icons of traditional Dakota life.

As much artist as soldier, Eastman was a genuine paradox. At Fort Snelling, he balanced government interests and Indian concerns—and married a Dakota woman, with whom he had a child. Transferred a few years later, he married an Anglo woman and continued to draw. As his artistic reputation grew, he was transferred back to Fort Snelling. He took up art full-time as illustrator for the 1851 treatise. But by the time it appeared, traditional Dakota life was transforming, as most tribal members faced religious conversion and displacement from their lands. —*Valerie Jablow*

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SMITHSONIAN HIGHLIGHTS

## Exhibitions and Events

### ARTS AND INDUSTRIES BUILDING

*On Gold Mountain: A Chinese American Experience* (May 18 through September 30) The exhibition explores six generations of a Chinese-American family who originally came to California in the late 19th century and links their story to that of Chinese-Americans in general. It also examines the events of Chinese immigration, re-creating such authentic environments as a trans-Pacific steamship.
*When the Spirit Moves: African American Dance in History and Art* (through June 1) Artifacts and artworks show how characteristics of African dance have influenced American dance.

### COOPER-HEWITT, NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
[NEW YORK CITY]

*Rooms with a View: Landscape & Wallpaper* (through October 14) A tour through the 300-year history of wallpaper and rooms decorated with landscape views.

### NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

*Within These Walls* (opening May 16) The exhibition features the museum's largest single artifact, an 18th-century Georgian house, and tells the stories of five families who lived in it between the 1760s and the 1960s. It also relates some of the momentous events they experienced over the course of 200 years in American history.
*Nobel Voices: Celebrating 100 Years of the Nobel Prize* (through October 31) Presents the stories of Nobel Laureates and draws on the museum's collection of related objects.

### NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART

*Beautiful Bodies: Form and Decoration of African Pottery* (May 6 through January 6, 2002) Hand-built clay vessels from contintental Africa, dating from the 19th through the 20th century, are characterized by a variety of forms, from human to geometric, and by rich surface textures.
*Encounters with the Contemporary* (through January 6, 2002) Works by 32 important African modernists.

### HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN

*William Kentridge* (through May 13) An artist's take on the recent troubled history of South Africa is revealed in this exhibition of short animated films and 60 charcoal drawings.

### NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

*Roberto Clemente* (through October 15) Showcases souvenirs from the career of the baseball legend, who is being featured for the second time on a United States postage stamp.

### FREER GALLERY OF ART

*Dinner for Five: Japanese Serving Dishes for Elegant Meals* (through October 21) Presents ceramic dishes used for the light meal called *kaiseki*. Tableware for the meal, often decorated with seasonal themes, developed into a major category of Japanese ceramics during the late 16th century.
*Real and Imagined Places in Japanese Art* (through October 21) Japanese paintings, ceramics and lacquer works from the 12th to the 19th century present views of real and imagined places.

### SMITHSONIAN TREASURES TO GO

During the renovation of the Smithsonian American Art Museum's gallery space, some 500 artworks will tour throughout the country. Museums hosting exhibitions this month include the Cheekwood Museum of Art (Nashville). For more information, call 202-347-2247 or click on "Treasures to Go" at americanart.si.edu.

## Smithsonian Website

### WWW.SMITHSONIANMAG.COM

At the Magazine's homepage, click on "Events" and go to the calendar to view on-line versions of exhibitions.

### CLOSED FOR RENOVATIONS

The Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery are closed for four years. The Anacostia Museum will reopen this fall.

## Planning a Smithsonian Visit?

To receive a free Associates' planning packet, write to Smithsonian Information, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560-0010, or send your request via e-mail to info@info.si.edu, or call 202-357-2700 (voice) or 202-357-1729 (TTY), 9 A.M.-5 P.M., Monday-Friday; 10 A.M.-4 P.M., Saturday-Sunday, or visit www.si.edu. Note: Museums are generally open 10 A.M.-5:30 P.M. daily, except December 25. Parking is limited; Metrorail is convenient to most museums.

### THE CASTLE—INFORMATION CENTER

Upon arrival make your first stop the Castle's Smithsonian Information Center. At the Associates' Reception Desk, open 9 A.M.-4 P.M. daily, learn what's new at the Smithsonian and learn about other area attractions too. Receive brochures, hear about your discount privileges and register for a Sunday morning behind-the-scenes members' tour of the Castle.

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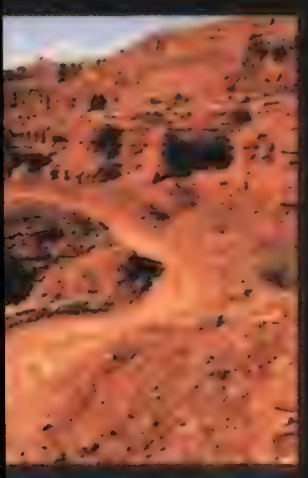

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BY VERLYN KLINKENBORG

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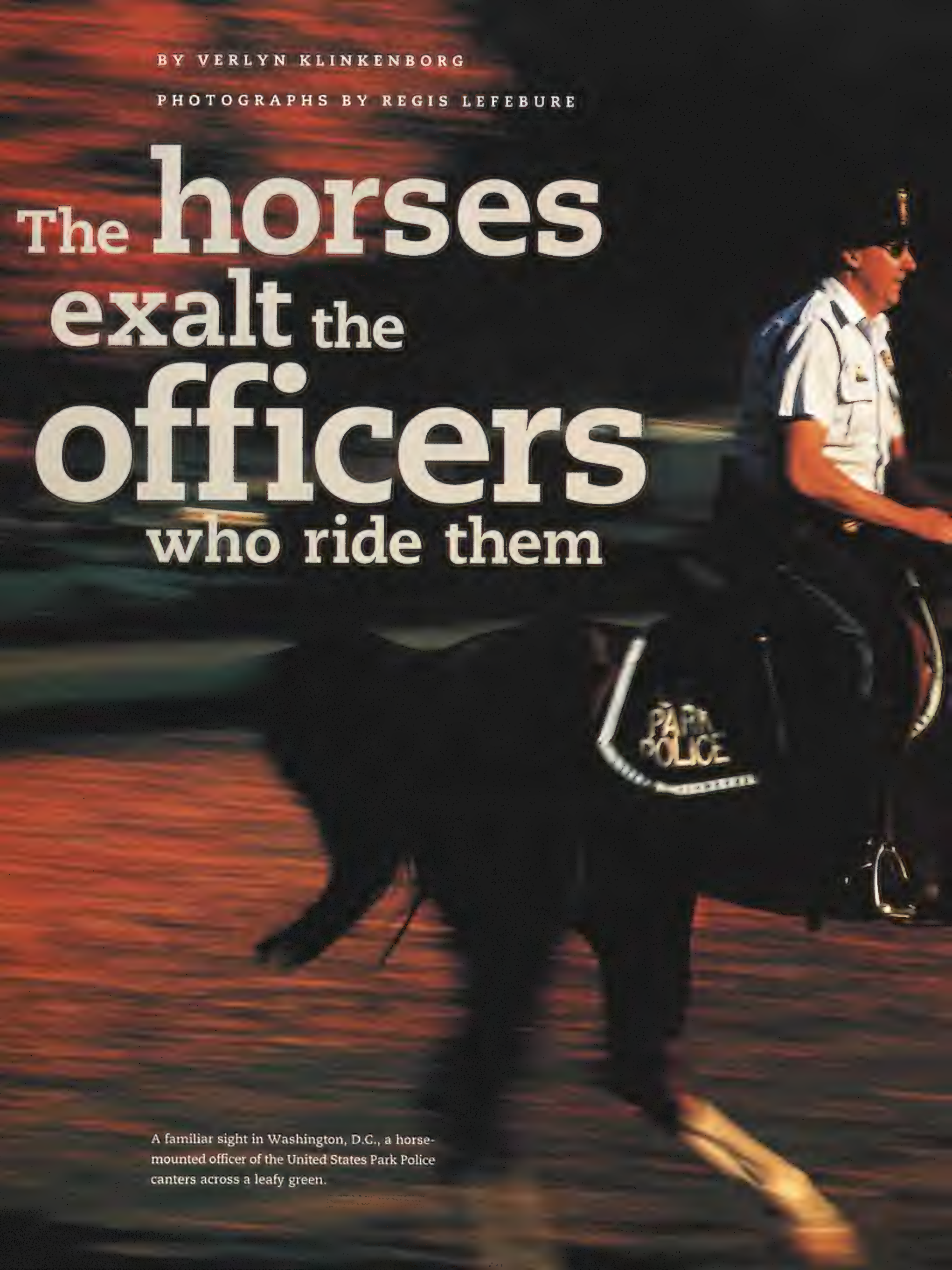
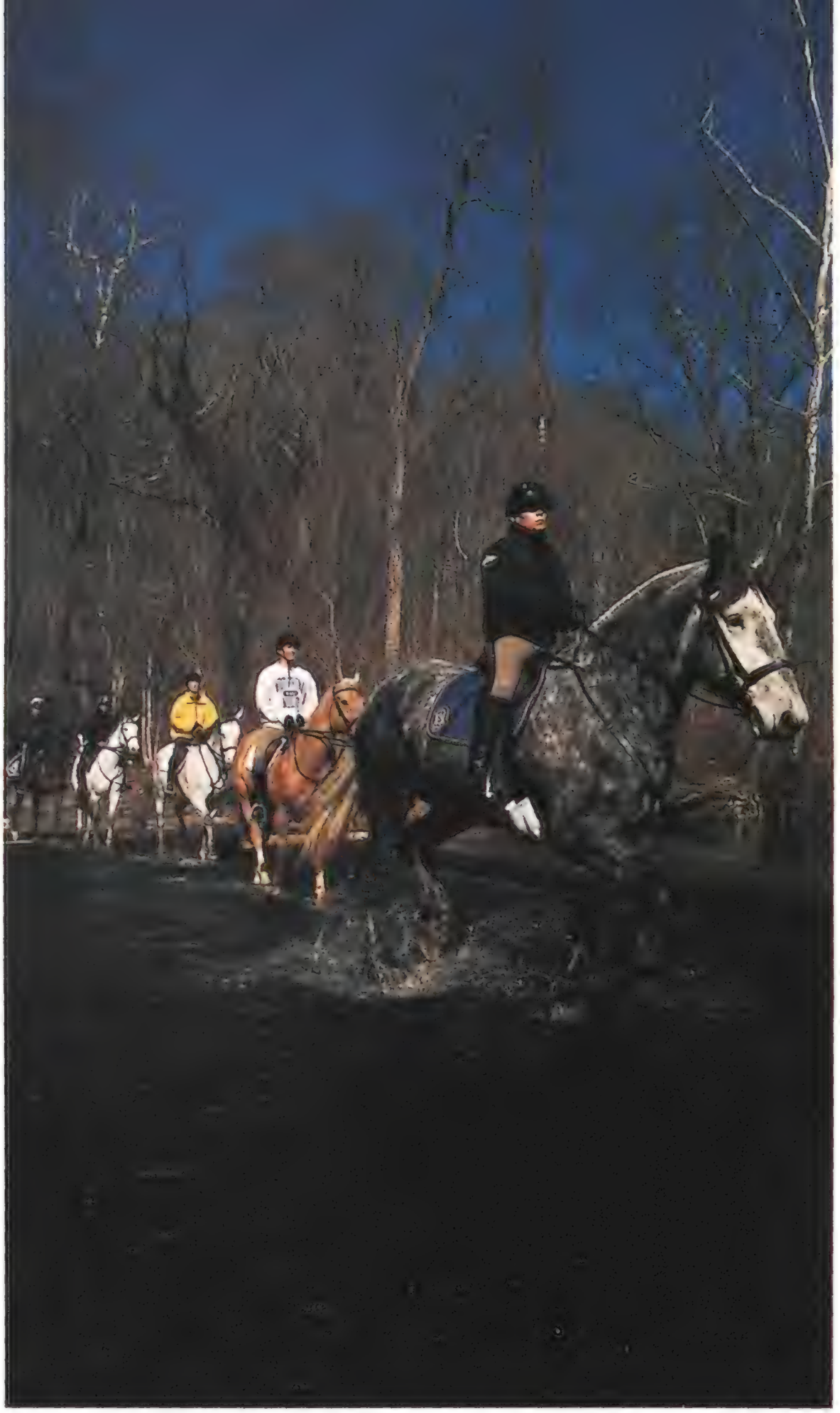
# The horses exalt the officers who ride them




A familiar sight in Washington, D.C., a horse-mounted officer of the United States Park Police canters across a leafy green.

ON A BEAUTIFUL spring afternoon, I found myself standing in Scott Circle, in Washington, D.C., at the foot of a sober statue of Gen. Winfield Scott. Both the general and the horse he bestrode had been cast from a cannon Scott captured in Mexico in 1847, which perhaps explains their gravity. Nearly every circle or square in Washington seems to feature an equestrian statue, and whatever else they may memorialize, those statues are usually monuments to immobility. The riders sit rigidly and the horses stand fast. All around Scott Circle, cars whirled past, caught in a centrifugal rush that flung them farther into the city or out into the suburbs. The vehicles roaring by that mute, immobile statue were particles in a high-energy urban stream that seemed completely inimical to horses, except for ones that had been made out of 19th-century cannon.

Park Police equestrian students practice riding without stirrups to improve balance.



Trainees negotiate Milkhouse Ford in Rock Creek Park. They learn to ride in all kinds of places and weather, and to deal with a variety of adverse situations.

And yet, I had just ridden halfway across the city of Washington on a living, breathing bay named Alfie, a 14-year-old thoroughbred gelding standing 65 inches—or 16.2 hands—high at the withers. It seemed like a feat at the time it happened, which was graduation day at Edgewater Stables, the main training center of the Horse Mounted Unit of the United States Park Police. By one o'clock, the graduates and their families had eaten most of the lunch that had been laid out in the second-floor classroom, a room full of desks and horse magazines and exercise equipment. They had eaten most of a sheet cake decorated with the Park Police logo, which had been set out in the barn lobby beneath photographs of officers riding in equitation competitions and a long litany of the names of retired horses. The audience had heard short speeches by Chief Robert Langston, head of the Park Police, and Lieut. Jackie Burks, the head of the Horse Mounted Unit. Then the members of the graduating class performed a musical ride, accompanied, in part, by the William Tell Overture and the shrieking of a police siren. The performance ended with pairs of riders leaping over a line of hay bales and out the barn door.

When the crowds dwindled at last, I mounted Alfie and rode off with two instructors, Officers Mariea Clowers and Barbara Blendy, and Sgt. Jenny Asseff from the Louisville, Kentucky, Police Department, one of many members of other police forces to have trained with the Park Police at Edgewater Stables over the years. Our route led us across a city built for motorized vehicles, along alleys, through frantic intersections, across

parking lots and parkways, beneath highway overpasses. Buses hurtled past our stirrups. Truck brakes squealed beside us. Cars slipped in and out of our wake. The horses took as much notice of the city careening around them as a veteran beat officer would, which is to say that they noticed nearly everything and were alarmed by none of it.

The cherry trees were in full bloom along the Tidal Basin, and tourists were nearly as numerous as the daffodils beneath the cherry boughs. Then we rode into sight. The crowds reacted as though we were amiable centaurs direct from the hills of ancient Greece. As we passed, every eye turned our way, and every camera winked. Children tugged their parents toward us, and vice versa. Tourists of every description clapped and stood aside in awe. Even office workers, taking a spell in the sunshine, unleashed faint smiles. For a moment, I thought I knew how it felt to be a mounted officer in the United States Park Police just going about his or her job. It felt very tall.

But if you had asked the 11 graduates of the Park Police's equestrian training program how they felt that day, the first thing they would have said, after "proud," is "sore." One student, Todd Roth, broke his arm in a fall during the fifth week of training and had to be sent home to San Francisco. A horse fell over backward on another student, Brian Huss, who made a brief visit to the hospital but was back in the saddle the following Monday. (He received an "Iron Man" award—a foam saddle pad—at the graduation ceremony.) Jenny Asseff lost two waist sizes in the first half of the ten-week course. Barbara Sloan fell into Rock Creek, and her mount pushed her into the mud with a hoof, thereby enacting, and perhaps dissipating, Sloan's worst equestrian fear. Moe, a paint in a barn full of thoroughbreds, bucked with half the riders who climbed aboard him. Nearly everyone joined what they called the "airborne club."

At Edgewater Stables, Mike Ocetnik and Alfie jump a hay bale on graduation day. The white cord around the horse's neck is part of the dress uniform worn for such occasions.

To qualify for the course, each student had already served as a police officer—shaking doors, as one Park Police veteran put it—for at least three years. But they all agreed that their ten weeks at Edgewater, which began in the cold and snow of mid-January, was the hardest training the Park Police had to offer. They discovered that what an old equestrian tract, called "Riding For Pupils," had to say was quite literally true. "Riding, like every other corporeal exercise, does not feel like what it looks like." To feel like the graduates of the equestrian training program at Edgewater, you also had to feel their pain. Which I did, in a way. Alfie had a bone-crushing trot.

For the members of the class called Remount 2000, graduation morning had begun, like every morning for the past 2 1/2 months, with routine stable duties at dawn, mucking out stalls, feeding horses, cleaning tack. Horses stood patiently on cross-ties in the aisles or shifted their weight from side to side, sometimes tapping the kick walls with their hooves. Every time a horse drank from the water basin in its stall, the basin refilled automatically with a hiss. Brushes whisked against horsehair, manure forks scraped against concrete, wheelbarrow tires thumped through the doorway leading to the manure pile.

The mood in the barn on graduation morning was almost what it had been those first few days in January—full of expectation—but now it lacked the undertone of dread. When the course began, only one student was an experienced rider. Most of the others had never been on a horse or had ridden only once or twice. They did

not even know how to use a manure fork, which, like posting to the trot or cantering circles or shaking doors, for that matter, requires a certain finesse.

Throughout history, every horse-mounted force—police or military—has faced the problem of turning recruits into skilled, hardened riders, whether the recruits come from a horse-mad culture like that of ancient Athens or from our modern abyss of equine ignorance. There's actually an advantage in beginning, as the Park Police does, with rank novices. "A raw man," wrote the Earl of Pembroke in *Military Equitation* (1761), "is much easier taught to do well, than one, who has learnt ever so long, on bad principles; for it is much more difficult to undo, than to do; and the same in respect to the horse." Some cavalries, like that of the medieval Egyptian Mamluks, began training their recruits, who were, in fact, slaves, on horse models made of stone, clay or wood before moving on to bareback animals. In theory the goal has always been to lead riders and horses gently into union with each other and with the unit as a whole. As an 1819 training manual for the English Horse Guards put it, "Great care should be taken to avoid the risk of a Recruit being unhorsed, or otherwise alarmed: every means must be used to give him confidence."

> The shift from crime fighting to crowd control came with the protests of the 1960s.

But few cavalries have ever tried to turn out a mounted force in just ten weeks. As a result, being unhorsed and alarmed was pretty much a chronic condition for the recruits at Edgewater. They rode in English saddles—standard issue for the Park Police. Some mornings, they rode bareback. Sometimes, they rode without stirrups and sometimes without girths, which taught them to ride the horse and not the saddle. They rode through smoke, and they played mounted soccer with an eight-foot blaze-orange ball. They rode in the arena at Edgewater and in an outdoor paddock hock-deep in mud. They rode down Rock Creek when it was edged with ice. They climbed a steep hill behind the barn, which put them on the streets of the Adams Morgan neighborhood. They rode at night, in the rain. Some mornings, they rode up an embankment to the Connecticut Avenue bridge, which towers above the Edgewater barn, and from which suicides sometimes plummet onto, and through, the barn roof. The recruits rode over obstacle courses that took them through the creek, up and down its steep banks, and over timber jumps. They groomed and groomed and groomed their mounts and polished every bit of silver and brass, soaped every piece of leather on their tack until it gleamed. They attended daily classes in subjects like "Parts of the Saddle & Bridle" and "Equine First Aid." They gave oral reports and took written tests and riding tests and stood with their mounts for inspection.

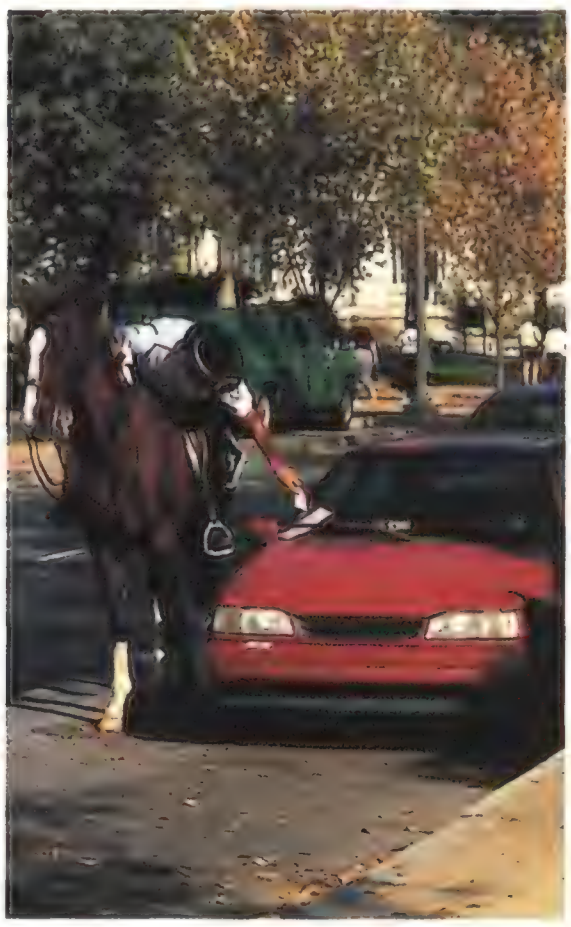
And still, as Officer Ronald Markland, one of the instructors at Edgewater, said, "They won't be comfort-

**Mounted police officers faced protesters in Washington last spring. Horses are good for crowd control because they intimidate demonstrators without antagonizing them.**

able until they've been riding on the street for a year"—comfortable not only with riding, but with the strange combination of riding, law enforcement and public popularity that makes up police equitation.

In 1934, when the Horse Mounted Unit was first established, the United States Park Police had already been in existence for 143 years. By then, its mission—to protect federal property in Washington—had been absorbed into the Department of the Interior, where it continues to operate as a branch of the National Park Service. (There are also Park Police field offices at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco, and at the Gateway National Recreation Area in Brooklyn.) The Washington Park Police patrolled in those days was a vastly different city from the one it patrols now. Not only was it considerably smaller and less crowded but it was also still a highly equestrian city, a place that reflected the value that Southerners have always placed on horses.

The day after graduation, I drove into Virginia to talk to Denis Ayres, who joined the Park Police in 1958 and retired in 1986, only to ride for another ten years as a ranger at Manassas National Battlefield Park. More than anyone, Ayres is responsible for the shape that police equitation has taken at Edgewater and, hence, in much of the rest of the country as well. Ayres and his wife, Anne, live on a few acres in the midst of what used to be foxhunting country but has now become office parks and housing developments with names like Bridlewood. "I'd ride down the driveway, pop a fence, pop a back fence and go foxhunting," said Ayres, still lean from a lifetime in the saddle. "But now you really have to fight your way out the driveway."



**The long arm of the law reaches down to ticket a car parked illegally on the Mall.**

The day before, I had ridden Alfie through the parking lot at the Kennedy Center. Early in Ayres' career, there had been three commercial stables on that spot, each with 50 horses. A network of bridle trails—38 miles of them, many of them now bike trails—ran from Hains Point along the Potomac River and all the way up through Rock Creek Park, which itself had five stables, where many senators and Congressmen kept horses. The park was also surrounded by estates with private stables. In 1958 the main duty of the Park Police was patrolling Rock Creek Park and the parks at Fort Dupont and Fort Hunt. "On a hot summer Sunday," Ayres said, a Virginia drawl softening his voice, "the dust would come across the parkway from the horses on the bridle trail. You'd come back from patrol and you were almost brown. It was a time when the gentlemen hacking up Rock Creek Park would tip their hats to the ladies riding down. Everybody turned out, boots and breeches. The dress code was adhered to. When you worked a detail in Rock Creek Park Saturdays and Sundays, that was a tip-your-hat detail. There were a lot of influential people out there."

But the '60s brought enormous changes. Ayres and his partner were the first officers to be moved downtown, largely because of an increase in serious crime on the National Mall. What they discovered there was the advantage their mounted height gave them. Unlike a motor officer, they could spot someone breaking into a car three blocks away, which made them highly effective. But the big change in mission—a shift from conventional crime fighting to crowd control—came with the civil rights

A Park Police horse named Hey Poppy patiently endures the kind of affectionate poking and petting that occurs many times during a typical day on the job.

and antiwar protests. And that posed a tactical problem. Ayres began searching for police and cavalry manuals that might outline methods for handling large civilian crowds with horse-mounted officers. He went to Manhattan and Detroit, and found nothing. "I went to the Pentagon and asked them for help. I figured the Army had manuals for everything from how to brush your teeth to how to kill a man. They went to the archives but what they found was pretty much outdated."

As it turned out, the demonstrations themselves were so numerous during those years that the Park Police soon acquired a body of knowledge that was deployed again recently when protesters gathered from around the country to try to shut down a Washington meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. "You've got a half-million people on the Monument grounds," said Ayres, remembering the largest of the antiwar demonstrations. "You'd have to penetrate those crowds and they'd outflank you. We found out that in a large demo we have to have support. You send 50 horses in there boot to boot, and your flanks are wide open. You've got to have scooters on your flanks and footmen behind you. You can make the first penetration and you don't stop. You don't have any arguments, you just keep on moving very slowly and let the footmen pick up the people. Let them take care of the arrests."

What makes police horses so effective at crowd control is the uncertainty they cause. Most people know nothing about horses and have, in fact, little sense of the scale of their physical presence. To experience it face-to-face, to see a phalanx of horses advancing step-by-step toward you with your back pressed against a seething crowd, is deeply intimidating. And yet, as Ayres pointed out, American protesters "were very horse-conscious. When you worked the civil rights demos, the antiwar demos, they were throwing bricks and bottles like the dickens. But you could hear the crowd holler, 'Don't hit the horse, don't hit the horse!'"

Even the slightest of the members of Remount 2000, Barbara Sloan, became an intimidating figure when she was helmeted and mounted on a horse standing 16 hands tall. To see all 11 graduates, with their instructors, out on a day ride was to get a clear sense of the sheer physical presence a body of riders created. One morning in early March, I parked along Pennsylvania Avenue in Southeast Washington, behind the Park Police horse trailers where Sgt. Alex Wynnyk and Officers Ronald Markland and Wil-

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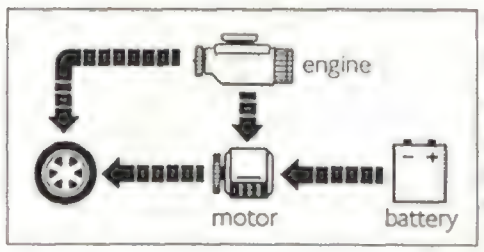


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A fountain near the White House gives two horses an opportunity to quench their thirst. On a hot summer day, a horse can drink more than ten gallons of water.

liam Good were waiting to escort Remount 2000 across the South Capitol Street Bridge. From there they would ride into Anacostia Park, where they would put on a crowd-control demonstration for Congressional staffers. The riders had set out an hour or so before us from Rock Creek Park, and when they turned onto Pennsylvania Avenue, trotting down the median strip, framed by the Capitol dome behind them, it was like watching a mounted detachment from a John Ford movie ride right into the urban present. Officer Pancho Gonzales, the instructor leading the ride, raised his arm and gave the signal to halt. Horses and riders sat at ease among newly planted saplings in the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mariea Clowers rode across the traffic on Rebel Command, a 19-year-old bay thoroughbred. She leaned down from the saddle—double-parked, as it were, against my rental car—and continued the conversation we had begun at the barn. She was the first female instructor in Park Police history and had been joined, only last year, by the second, Barbara Blendy. "I was always horse crazy," Clowers said. "I started pestering my parents for a horse when I was 13, but I never had one of my own to ride until I joined the Park Police." Now, as one of six instructors, she not only trains students, she also trains several of the horses that are donated to the Park Police. They come from all around Washington, from big thoroughbred-racing operations and from individual owners as well. Some have been steeplechasers and some have been backyard pets. They come to the Park Police for almost as many reasons as there are horses. "When Mary goes to college and Daddy's not going to support that horse anymore," Ayres told me, "you might get a pretty nice horse." Alex Wynnyk, who has been with the Park Police since 1971, estimates that 80 percent of the horses donated to the service work out. The reason they do is often simply because they have a job.

A horse, as Ayres remarked, is always a creature of his environment, whatever that environment may be. "You can take him through Edgewater, you can put all the obstacles in the world in front of him, and he'll adapt to it. That's his paddock. But when you walk out those doors and you walk behind the Washington Post building on Sunday morning and all that paper's blowing all over that alley, and he walks down through there quietly, then you know you've got your horse." But when Ayres first began training Secret Service officers to ride with President Reagan, he discovered that that truth works both ways. The first time he went to Camp David, he picked the best downtown horses on the force—the ones that "will stand in front of the White House, cement-mixer dumping concrete all day long, and don't pay any attention to it." But at Camp David, "the deer jump up and the turkeys jump up and the horse goes to try to climb a tree."

In a sense, a police horse plays on both the affections and the fears of the public. I had noticed that while riding Alfie among the cherry blossoms. People either clutched their be-

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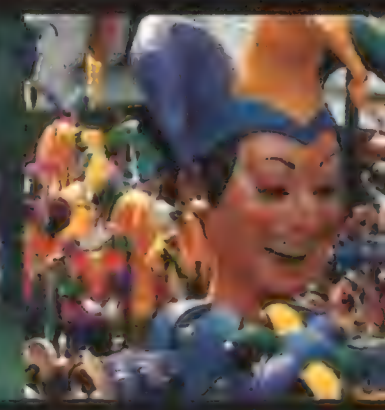

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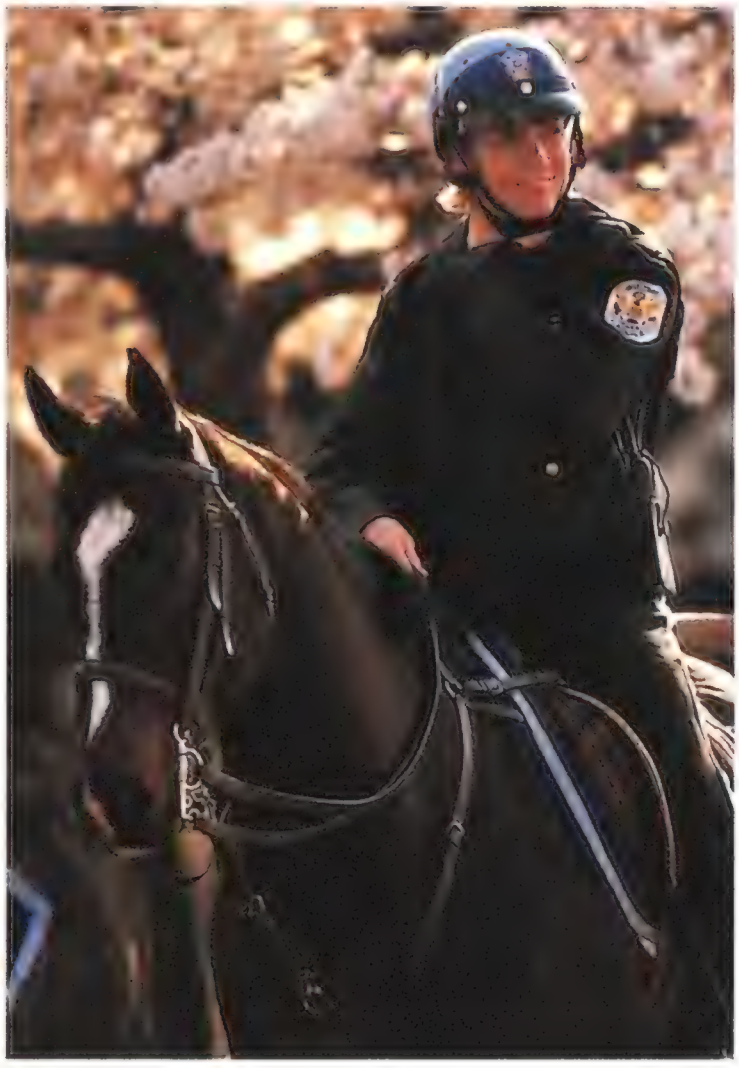
"When we sent horses into the neighborhoods, you could never get them back out again."

longings and stepped away from the horses or they treated them as though they were no more likely to kick out or make a misstep than the horse being ridden day and night by General Scott in the traffic circle that bears his name. The Park Police horses become accustomed to remarkable things, things that make a rural horse-owner shake his head. What makes it possible is the equine nature—that gracious, almost compassionate tolerance—and slow, steady exposure. At Anacostia Park, the troop stood quietly while a Park Police helicopter landed a few hundred feet away and while a police car circled inches away with lights and sirens flashing and wailing. The horses rode steadily through a screen of thick black smoke billowing up from canisters sputtering on the ground. The horses stood their ground while Congressional staffers, wearing suits and loafers, climbed aboard for photographs. But perhaps most surprising of all, the horses rode quietly across the South Capitol Street Bridge, across the expansion joints, through the lanes of traffic merging and splitting off, while the bridge thrummed underfoot, an unnatural environment for a horse if there ever was one. I was right behind them, driving slowly with my flashers on, giving the students a cushion from the crush of traffic. The sight of it—those bay horses on that stern, gray bridge—caused a thrill of horror and admiration.

As Remount 2000 crossed through Southeast Washington, making its way to the bridge, people in the neighborhood came to their doors and windows to watch. And that was a reminder of the horses' greatest value to the Park Police. As good as they are at crowd control and routine police work, they perform miracles in the public's perception of the Park Police. The horses exalt the officers who ride them, but they also transform the character of the police in the public's eye. "When we sent horses into the neighborhoods," Ayres told me, "you could never get them back out again. The neighborhood would not allow it. You could change the officer but you had to send the same horse out there. Everybody knew the horse's name. They might not know the officer's name. In the toughest places, where the Good Humor man rides around in an armored car, that horse could walk the streets, and people would leave buckets in the backyard to give the horse water in the summer. People would leave the garage open so you could get inside when it was raining or snowing."

Equestrian Washington has mostly vanished. The days when a sitting President, like Ronald Reagan, rode three times a week, and many of his Cabinet members rode as well, will probably never return. Those times are remembered mainly on the walls at Edgewater Stables, which are hung with photographs of Presidents and First Ladies and First Children in the saddle in Rock Creek Park, accompanied by Park Police officers. Chaotic, sometimes violent mass demonstrations, like the ones that occupied the Park Police during the late 1960s and 1970s, are also mostly a memory. But one thing that is not a memory—that remains a matter of ongoing, daily routine—is the sight of a mounted Park Police officer riding down the National Mall, as much a part of the place as the oxblood sandstone of the Smithsonian Castle behind her. If horse and rider pause for a moment, they seem almost as fixed as poor General Scott. But then the horse lowers its head to accept the touch of a child's tentative hand, and after a few moments, officer and mount move on, through a line of parked cars and out into traffic.

**Officer Mariea Clowers astride Rebel Command keeps a friendly eye on tourists at cherry-blossom time.**



*Verlyn Klinkenborg, a member of the* New York Times *editorial board, is the author of* The Last Fine Time. *Regis Lefebure photographed the Dry Tortugas for the November 1999* SMITHSONIAN.

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# A LAVISH LEGACY

BY HELEN DUDAR

HEIRESS MARJORIE MERRIWEATHER POST'S WASHINGTON, D.C. ESTATE, THE HILLWOOD MUSEUM AND GARDENS, IS A SHOWCASE FOR HER STATELY COLLECTION OF FINE AND DECORATIVE ARTS

MARJORIE MERRIWEATHER POST, whose fortune was rooted in such down-to-earth grocery-shelf items as Postum and Post Toasties, had the means to acquire almost anything that her collector's zeal desired—and she hardly ever stopped acquiring: fabled Fabergé eggs, precious Beauvais tapestries, museum-quality antique furniture, rich Aubusson rugs, sets and sets of brilliantly decorated 18th-century Sèvres porcelain. She bought to grace her grand homes with rare and beautiful things and, after death claimed her, to delight and educate the public about yesterday's treasures. Tuesday through Saturday, every month except February, any tourist with a reservation can wander through the opulently decorated Washington, D.C. home she called Hillwood.

It is now the Hillwood Museum and Gardens, a sprawl of buildings that once sheltered regiments of servants and a 25-acre stretch of land providing yardage for, among other amenities, a pet cemetery, a nine-hole putting green, four fallout shelters and a Japanese-style garden. In the warm months, the landscape blooms effusively—rhododendrons, magnolias, azaleas, flowering cherry trees and an embarrassment of roses. Marjorie Post was as passionate about flowers as she was about Sèvres. To be sure, the plants are not quite as historic as the porcelains. There are, among many sets of dinnerware, four services commissioned by Russia's Catherine the Great. Mrs. Post once calculated that she had collected pieces of the ware in 11 different countries.

Sometimes, in reviewing her life, it seems as if Marjorie Merriweather Post dedicated a considerable portion of her adult years to shopping—for people she cared about, for her homes, for personal adornment. In 1971, when she was 84, her expenditures for clothing and accessories came to a quarter of a million dollars. As one of her biographers put it, "She was not afraid to be rich."

And she was not afraid to

Hillwood's French Louis XVI-style drawing room features Beauvais tapestries, carved paneling, fine porcelains, an 18th-century Roentgen rolltop desk, left rear, and furniture upholstered in Gobelins tapestries. Inset: The gilded vase (c. 1840) is from Russia's Imperial Porcelain Factory.

The south facade of Hillwood opens onto the crescent-shaped lunar lawn and its lofty elms. From here guests could look out over Rock Creek Park toward the Washington Monument. Empress Alexandra wore the diamond-encrusted crown below at her wedding to Russia's Nicholas II in 1894.

be richly plebeian. Once, her yacht, perhaps the grandest of private sailing vessels, ferried some American newspaper correspondents and embassy attachés around the North Sea. Every night after dinner, a steward bearing a fine silver tray turned up with a special treat for the guests: the choice of ten kinds of chewing gum.

From Mrs. Post's point of view, the offering was surely superior to the traditional postprandial array of liqueurs. She was devoted to the idea of healthy living. And, although she entertained frequently and regally, dinner was served promptly at 8 P.M., and guests were rushed to the table before they could comfortably consume the second cocktail. She skimped on nothing—once she even brought in the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus as entertainment for her friends—but she was never comfortable with the notion that two drinks were socially obligatory before the evening meal.

This most elegantly gowned and carefully adorned woman was also passionate about square dancing; guests who prayed inexperience would excuse them from participating were provided with instructors hired for the evening from an Arthur Murray studio. A veteran of the occasions remembered that the dance was conducted with "paramilitary precision." Needless to say, the hostess herself was a good dancer.

It is touching to learn that when Marjorie Post was just 22 and embarked on the first of four marriages, a friend described her as a young woman who didn't know how to have fun. She would learn.

Ultimately, there was the fun of buying or building and filling dwelling places. She had a number of properties, suitable to the changing seasons. Hillwood was appropriate to the benign months of spring and fall. Much of the summer was spent at Topridge, a 207-acre camp in New York State's Adirondack Mountains that had a staff of 85, including a maid for each of the 18 guest cottages. For the winter months, there was her Palm Beach refuge, the 115-room Mar-A-Lago, with its nine-hole golf course.

When life on land became tiresome, a change of air and scenery could always be found aboard her 316-foot yacht, the *Sea Cloud*. A four-master tended by a crew of 72, it offered such features as a fireplace and marble bath in the master suite. Well-appointed guest rooms sheltered such notables as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and Rafael Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic.

A new mode of transport was acquired after one of Post's husbands,

P. 58, P. 60 (BOTTOM) EDWARD OWEN; PP. 59-60 (TOP) HARLYN HAMBRIGHT

Herbert May, set out to cure her of her fear of flying. One brilliantly calm day, he coaxed her aboard an airplane. Twenty minutes after experiencing the magic of soaring through cloudless skies, she said, "Herb, I like this." A few minutes later, she announced, "Herb, I want one." And so, by the magic of ever-available dollars, the couple purchased a 44-passenger, four-engine aircraft, remodeled to include a comfortable living room and an efficient kitchen that could turn out respectably hot-cooked meals. Renamed the *Merriweather* (her mother's maiden name), it was used fearlessly and regularly.

Post's four marriages produced three daughters, the last of whom, Nedenia Hutton, became Dina Merrill, an actress seen on film, television and stage. Mother did not approve. "She was horrified," Merrill recalls cheerfully. "She brought me up to be a wife and mother." And her predictions for the future were dire: "'Your husband will hate it, your children will hate it.'" In time Post's views softened, although never to the point of assessing performance. Costume failure was more likely to catch her eye.

"She would say, 'Now, did you know that skirt was rather uneven?'" remembers Merrill. This may seem irrelevant, but not to a woman obsessed with detail. Marjorie Post, after all, was the fastidious hostess who, in preparation for an elegant dinner party, would have her butler circle the table, ruler in hand, to make certain that each assemblage of cutlery was precisely spaced.

She was just as careful about her appearance and her well-being. Far into her senior years, Post was slender and strikingly handsome, with a posture a career military officer might envy. She fiercely pursued a healthy lifestyle and imposed it on guests. Dinner, she felt, should always include a red, yellow and green vegetable; bedtime was as close to a sensible 11 P.M. as possible. Long before gym workouts became the custom of the time, her day began with a regime of exercises. She took care not to expose her fair complexion to the sun, and when she swam in one of her pools, her bathing costume was prudently fitted with long sleeves.

Marjorie Merriweather Post was born in 1887 in Springfield, Illinois. An only child, she was quite young when her father, C. W. Post, suffering nervous and physical ailments nobody could diagnose, moved his family to Battle Creek, Michigan, in search of a cure at the famed Dr. Kellogg's sanitarium there.

EDWARD OWEN

**Reflecting on her 1969 bequest of Hillwood and its contents to the public, Marjorie Merriweather Post wrote, "I am particularly attracted by the beauty of an object, its craftmanship, history, etc." The glamorous collector was 47 the year this portrait was painted by artist Frank O. Salisbury.**

The estate's sumptuous dining room evokes the grandeur of the past with its French Regency carved oak paneling, elegant table setting, Aubusson rug, silver candelabra and cut flowers, specially grown at Hillwood. The Sèvres *bleu céleste* porcelain soup tureen and platter below were made in Vincennes in 1754.

He got better and, an innovative man, he got rich. Wealth first came with the development of Postum, a coffee substitute, and later through the earliest versions of fast, easy breakfast foods that didn't require cooking. In essence, he helped forever change America's morning eating habits.

In 1905, at age 18, Marjorie married the first of her husbands, Edward Bennett Close, a young lawyer with old money, and in time she gave birth to two daughters, Adelaide and Eleanor. Eight years after the wedding, her father, besieged by old ailments and convinced he had cancer, fired a bullet into his mouth.

His lovely, doted-on daughter, who already owned her late mother's stock in the family company, became the sole inheritor of the Postum Cereal Company, valued at about $20 million. In 1914 that made her a woman of fine fortune. Close represented her interests on the board of directors, but even without a title, Marjorie, who had a keen business sense, apparently had a great deal to say about major decisions.

Not long after C. W. Post's death, the Closes acquired the first of the heiress's showplace dwellings—a grand Fifth Avenue mansion in New York City, which had to be furnished in keeping with its grandness. For guidance, the young wife turned to Sir Joseph Duveen, the British antiques and art dealer who did business on both sides of the Atlantic. She bought from him and, at his suggestion, took courses at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to learn about tapestries and other decorative objects.

Duveen was the fabled dealer who found and sold Old Master works that formed the great collections of, among others, Henry Clay Frick, John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Mellon. It appears, however, that he could never interest Mrs. Post in major paintings. In her early years of

R. LAUTMAN; EDWARD OWEN

buying, she actually acquired a Rubens and a Reynolds, but at some point, these were sold off. Post's preference was for decorative objects—especially ones with historic import or royal associations—a diamond-studded crown worn by Alexandra at her wedding to Nicholas II of Russia, a jeweled Fabergé egg that once contained a figure of Catherine the Great, Gobelins tapestries given to Prince Henry of Prussia by Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette that now adorn a suite of upholstered chairs and sofas.

It should be noted that although she spent generously on her homes, her family and herself, Mrs. Post never stinted on public needs. During World War I, she funded a 3,000-bed U.S. Army hospital in France. For the first years of the Great Depression, she supported a church canteen in New York that provided meals to destitute women and children, and she raised money for the Salvation Army's relief programs. Over the years, Post funds were also poured into the Boy Scouts, the American Red Cross, the National Symphony Orchestra and her alma mater, Washington, D.C.'s Mount Vernon Seminary (a girls' finishing school that is now part of George Washington University). Friends also knew her charity. When, for instance, actress Billie Burke, widow of show business impresario Florenz Ziegfeld, fell on hard times, it was Post money that sustained her.

Post's first marriage fell apart after Close returned from the war. (Close and his next wife became the grandparents of actress Glenn Close.) In 1920, the heiress wed E. F. Hutton, movie-star handsome, charming and a widower, born poor and grown rich as a broker. Their marriage produced her third daughter, Nedenia. In her flamboyantly titled *American Empress*, Nancy Rubin, one of Post's biographers, writes that friends and family believe that Hutton was "the grand passion of her life." The two became "a fairy-tale couple," part of the 1920s new monied class that counted celebrities, politicians and tycoons among its circle of friends.

Hutton helped transform the Postum Cereal Company into a public company and became its chairman. In time, Postum bought up other food firms and then, bowing to Marjorie's early conversion to the practicality of frozen foods, purchased the pioneering Birdseye business and became the powerful General Foods Corporation.

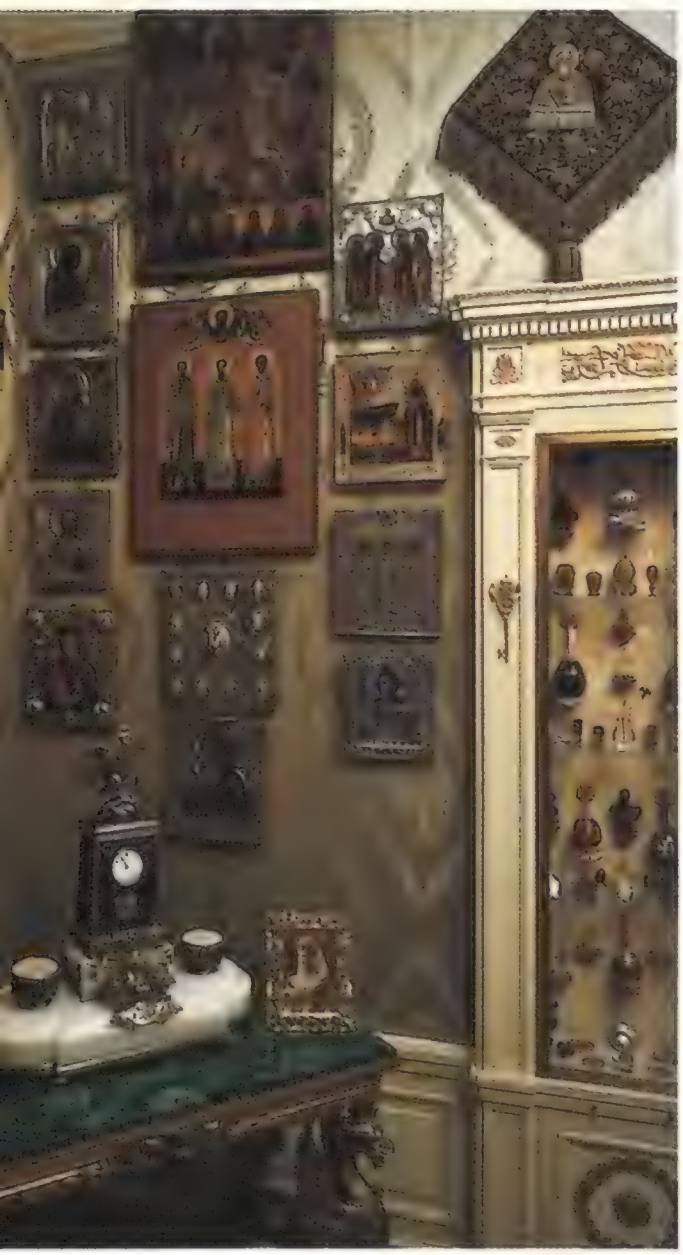
Marjorie also kept right on buying to decorate her homes. One of her finest purchases was the famed Roentgen desk crafted about 1770 by the German father-and-son cabinetmakers who turned out pieces for the royal houses of Europe. The desk (now at Hillwood) is treasured for, among other delights, mechanical devices that can open 40 secret compartments. It was kept in her bedroom in New York and, remarkably, Nedenia, at the age of about 5, was allowed to play with it if she treated it gently. She was fascinated—and careful: "I'd open up all the secret drawers and fantasize about what must have been going on—in its old days."

By the early 1930s, the Huttons were drifting apart, politically and personally. He opposed Roosevelt, whom she strongly supported. The fatal blow to their union was her discovery that he was entertaining ladies in his bedroom. Before the divorce was final she met Joseph Davies, an important lawyer and a big Roosevelt supporter. In 1937, not long after their marriage, Davies was posted to the Soviet Union as Ambassador. Husband and wife were dedicated antiques collectors, and this expedition was their introduction to Russian arts. Twenty years after the revolution, there were still good things to be

**Worn by one of the bishops who officiated at Nicholas II's coronation in 1896, this gold brocade vestment was woven in a pattern of imperial double-headed eagles and stylized leaves. The Russian Orthodox diamond- and cameo-studded gold chalice below was commissioned by Catherine the Great in 1791.**

EDWARD OWEN (2)

A *Boyar Wedding Feast* (1883) by Konstantin Makovskii came to Hillwood from the Smithsonian Institution in the late 1960s. This lively historical genre painting depicts the union of two royal families in the 17th century. The Icon Room, pictured below, is a showcase for Russian liturgical icons and precious treasures by Fabergé.



found in commission shops and in warehouses, whose holding bins were cluttered with dust-encrusted goods confiscated from once-great homes.

Some days, the elegant 50-year-old wife of the Ambassador could be found crawling through gritty, dimly lit storage spaces, plucking out icons, church vestments, silver chalices and china. The Communists, disdainful of these luxury goods, sold most of them by weight. Cleaned, polished and repaired, they became the nucleus of a great Russian collection.

After a year and a half in Russia and then a brief posting at the Brussels Embassy, the Davies came home to the United States. Many of the best things in the Russian collection, in fact, were found at auctions and in shops in New York and in Western Europe. Eventually Hillwood would house the most comprehensive collection of 18th- and 19th-century Russian imperial art outside Russia.

Settled in Washington, D.C. during World War II, Marjorie soon became a stellar hostess. But the marriage began to wither. Davies got cranky and disagreeably possessive. His political fortunes were waning, her social importance was rising, and he was afflicted with jealousy.

After 19 years, divorce came and, with it, a division of properties and collections. He kept their Washington home, which was in his name, and a fair number of fine Russian pieces. Once again bearing her maiden name, Post began shopping for replacements for pieces Davies had claimed. And yes, Dina Merrill recalls, her well-monied mother was capable of bargaining over price.

Determined to replace her former Washington residence with something equally impressive, in 1955 at age 68, Post bought the estate she named Hillwood. By this time, she had already decided that she was creating not only a new home but a future museum. Renovations consumed two years before the house was ready for its new owner. The new installations included a five-foot-high jewelry safe just outside Post's dressing room and a walk-in safe in the pantry for the fine silver.

Post entertained lovingly and lavishly. The baronial dining room, 38 feet long, holds a huge table, which is unique; it was custom-made in a Florentine workshop, with a mosaic top artfully composed of bits of marble and semiprecious stones, and it has enough leaves to seat 36 guests comfortably. For company, it was always set with the best of the Post collection: fragile antique tablecloth, silver cutlery, dazzling dishware.

One of the favorite childhood memories of her granddaughter, Ellen Charles, is Mrs. Post guiding guests about the house. "She loved to take us around and talk about the provenance of an object and how she found it and who it had belonged to."

For a time, the gracious host of these Hillwood events was Herbert May, a handsome, beguiling Pittsburgh businessman. In contrast to the abrasive Davies, May, a widower with grown children who was four years Post's junior, was witty and easygoing. To Ellen Charles, who sent congratulations on their 1958 wedding, the 71-year-old bride wired back, "Walking on fluffy pink clouds." It was not signed "Granny." Post disliked the age-defining label; the acceptable substitute was "Mummy-da."

EDWARD OWEN; J. ANDERSON

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Mrs. Post's expansive collection of Sèvres porcelain features 18th-century pieces such as this ice cup from the costly Cameo Service commissioned c. 1778-79 by Catherine the Great. The commode with pastoral marquetry below was handcrafted c. 1775 by Jean-Henri Riesener, cabinetmaker to Louis XVI of France.

Mummy-da could be overpoweringly generous. As a debutante, Charles, who lived with her family in the country, would sometimes stay with her grandmother when she had a formal date in town. The only problem was resisting her grandmother's attempts to festoon her with pieces of jewelry unsuitable for a teenage girl.

Five years after Post's marriage to Herb May, the pink clouds turned gray. Some friends and family had known or suspected that his interests extended to members of his own sex. Now, photographs turned up showing Post's husband at play with young men around the Mar-A-Lago pool. Once again, she was Marjorie Merriweather Post.

The promise—or threat—of a new effort at marital bliss came soon after. Ever optimistic, Post began seeing Fred Korth, who was 20 years younger and had run the Navy Department under President John F. Kennedy. When her three daughters learned that she was contemplating a fifth husband, they rebelled. Their counsel: live with him, but don't get married. In the end, it was Korth who finally decided to cancel wedding plans; he did not want to appear to be taking a wife for her wealth.

Post's last few years were harsh. The woman who had seemed eternally young suffered a series of small strokes that left her increasingly frail. Her hearing deteriorated, and by 1972 she was in a wheelchair, often unable to recognize familiar faces. The end came in September 1973; she was 86.

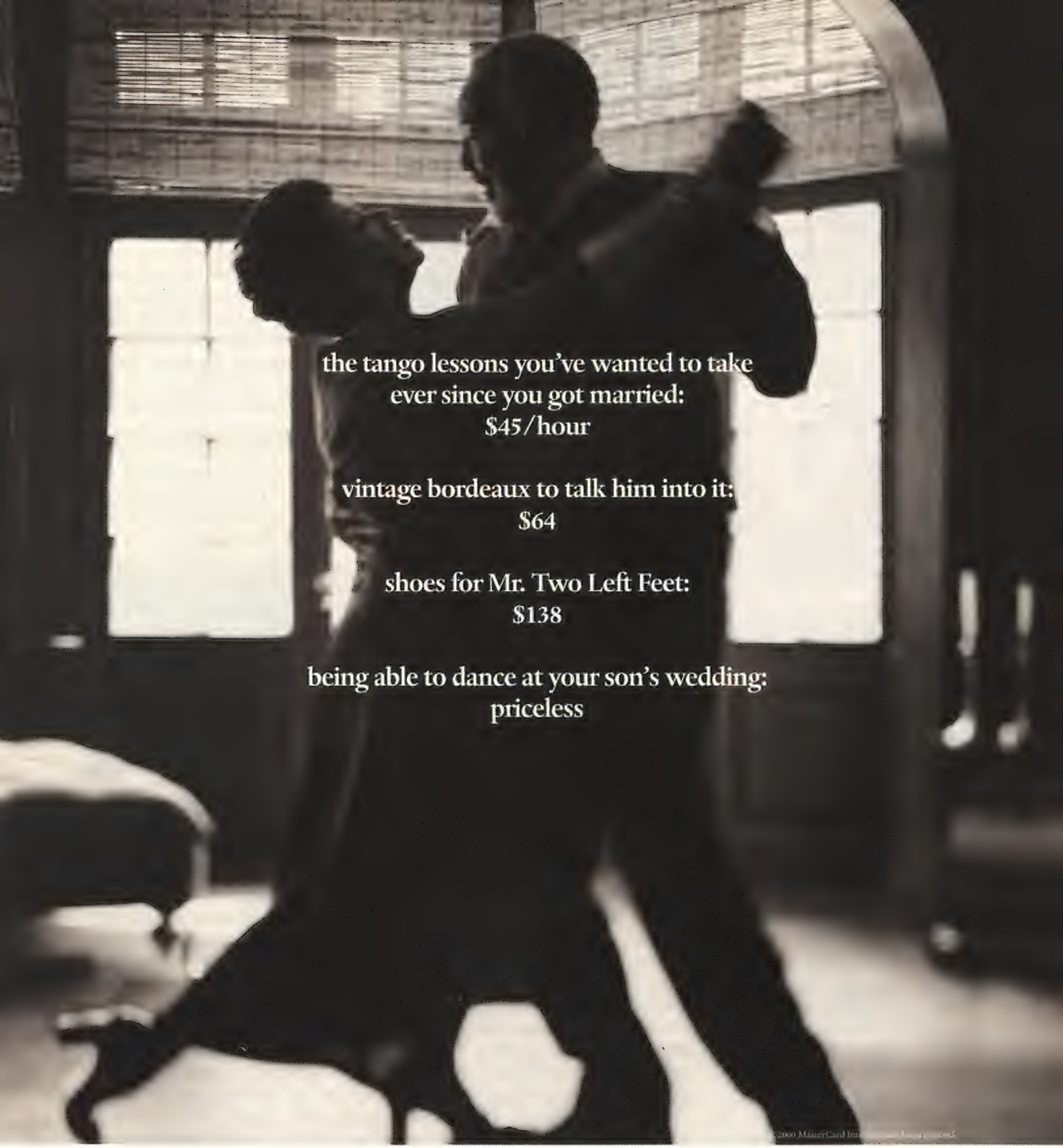
By then, she might not even have remembered that she had bestowed great gifts on her country. And even some of these plans went awry. Her will gave Mar-A-Lago to the federal government as a winter refuge for Presidents, but it was judged unsuitable for that use and rejected. Donald Trump, the high-profile developer, bought it for $10 million and turned it into a private club.

Hillwood was left to the Smithsonian Institution, which decided the operating costs were not affordable and gave it back. The place was then taken over by a foundation, which is now headed by Ellen Charles.

Washington abounds in museums, but no other local establishment can boast a sprawling complex of greenhouses sheltering several thousand orchid plants, assiduously cultivated to make dressy rooms even dressier; an Adirondack lodge; a French parterre; a Russian dacha; a charming café; and a wide lawn bordered by elms that frame a view of the Washington Monument, some six miles away.

For serious reasons, Hillwood's admission policy is quirky. Reservations are required and limited to no more than 250 visitors a day because of its residential location. It is only within the past year, however, that Hillwood has regularly received its daily maximum of visitors. The estate, which began its life as a public museum in 1977, was recently closed for almost three years for major renovations. Structural repairs were made, new heating, cooling and ventilation systems were installed, state-of-the-art lighting was added, a new Visitor

EDWARD OWEN (2)


the tango lessons you've wanted to take
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Center was built, surfaces were refinished, painted and polished, and tired fabrics—the lavender silk velvet covering the walls of the entertainment room, for example—were replaced.

The publicity attendant on the reopening last September attracted substantial print. Even so, it is possible to board a local taxi whose driver has never heard of Hillwood and who loses his way in search of it. As Anne Odom, deputy director for collections and chief curator, ruefully concedes, Hillwood, to a degree, remains "an unknown jewel."

What the visitor sees on arrival is a large, white-pillared redbrick mansion without a note of serious ostentation. Step through the door, however, and the impact is reminiscent of the shock of a fledgling traveler's first encounter with a European palace.

An orientation film on Hillwood describes aspects of the place as "a theatrical presentation verging on opera"—a slight understatement and a fair description of Mrs. Post's lifestyle, as well as her estate. The spacious, marble-floored foyer is dominated by a massive, glittering French chandelier thought to have once brightened a chamber of a Russian palace. The staircase curves gracefully toward the second floor, its walls lined with period portraits of royal and aristocratic figures who, in their abundance, somehow suggest family, or, at the very least, good friends. Portraits of Post herself, beautiful and bejeweled, are scattered throughout, along with two carved marble busts and a number of miniatures.

The dining room table reposes on a manor-size Aubusson rug, said to have been the gift of Napoleon III to Maximilian of Mexico. The walls of the room are embellished with elaborately carved French wood paneling, dating from around 1730, that was once part of a fine Parisian town house.

From room to room, a visitor finds

**The spirited Mrs. Post, an enthusiastic and skilled square dancer, kicks up her heels.**

cases of small precious objects; enameled and jeweled Easter eggs made as Russian royal family gifts; breathtaking little gold boxes; miniature picture frames decorated with diamonds, rubies and pearls; clocks so grand the observer cares not what time they tell.

Many objects are the work of the fabled firm of Carl Fabergé, jeweler to the court of St. Petersburg. In her buying years, Post first found and delighted in old French gold boxes. The natural next step was Fabergé, discovered even before her seminal stay in Russia. Over the years, she managed to collect nearly 90 pieces.

Visitors must either tour Hillwood in small groups with a docent or use an audio earpiece to learn about what they are seeing. For the most part, labels are absent. Mrs. Post wanted Hillwood to look like the place she called home, and even discreet little cards would spoil the effect. There is one other irrevocable rule: although she often hosted royalty, diplomats and international celebrities, she left stern instructions that when her museum opened to the public, food was never to be served in the main house.

Each room seems richer than the last. The eye encounters the two dazzling commodes fashioned by the great 18th-century cabinetmaker Jean-Henri Riesener; the gold brocade vestment worn by a bishop who officiated at Czar Nicholas II's coronation; a swivel chair that belonged to Marie Antoinette and may have been used when she sat to have her hair powdered; two 17th-century silver-gilt chalices, engraved with holy images and used in Russian church services.

Halfway through the house, a visitor may suffer the sensation experienced at an endless holiday meal: the unsettling feeling of having seriously overeaten. "Eye candy," Odom acknowledges with a faint smile of the experienced. Exhaustion vanishes, however, on the threshold of the space called the Icon Room. In the orientation film, Hillwood's executive director, Frederick J. Fisher, describes it as "probably the most exciting room in the house." It's hard to fault the hyperbole. The room is small, dramatic and crammed. On the walls, in every size, from floor to ceiling, are stiff, stern, stylized images, some more than four centuries old. Russian church figures bearing holy messages, they are simultaneously remote and fiercely personal. The prized Fabergé objects and other imperial Russian treasures on display here offer a sumptuous counterpoint to these severe iconic images.

It's unlikely any major addition will join these objects. Hillwood was left $10 million, which shrewd management has fattened to $180 million; the income is enough to run a private museum and to allow for some acquisitions, but not enough to purchase another Fabergé egg should one turn up. A sorry fact but not really grave. Ellen Charles, who has occasion to visit the place often, says that after all these years of roaming through her grandmother's home, she always encounters something she has never seen before.

*A frequent contributor, New York-based author Helen Dudar writes regularly on the arts.*

ALFRED EISENSTAEDT/TIMEPIX

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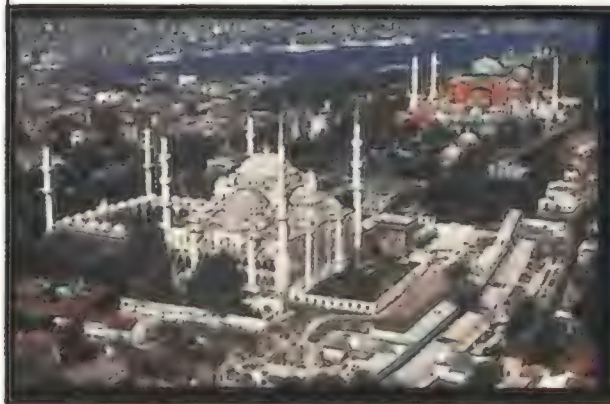

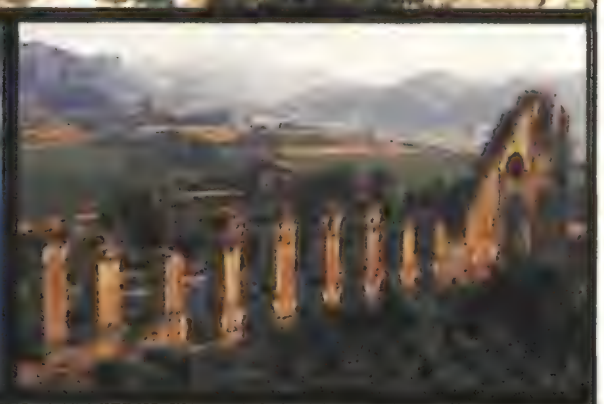

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# Le Bocuse d'Or

WHEN THE AMERICAN CHEF TRACY O'GRADY SHOWED UP AT THE GRAND SUMMIT OF HAUTE CUISINE THIS YEAR, SHE HAD ONE THING ON HER MIND: WINNING

THE FIRST TIME TRACY O'Grady attended the Bocuse d'Or World Cuisine Contest in Lyon, France, she was a spectator, and the riotous atmosphere inside the cavernous exhibition hall of the Eurexpo Center took her by surprise. It was more like a soccer match than an event billed as the world's most important competition between professional chefs. To be sure, there was an array of cooking stations, each equipped with a refrigerator, an oven, a four-burner stove, a sink, a work area and some basic gear, and in the pit in front stood two long judges' tables. But above the cooking stations hung a gaudy blizzard of sponsorship banners and a giant closed-circuit TV monitor, and stretching upward into the stadium-like gloom were enough bleachers to accommodate a couple of thousand culinary groupies chanting, waving their country's flags, whistling and stamping their feet to the rock music blaring from a deafening sound system.

For two days, Tracy looked on as chefs and assistants chopped, broiled and basted. When each pièce de résistance was done, it was artfully arranged on a gleaming silver platter, accompanied by at least three original garnishes, or side dishes. The judges performed their solemn duties, inspecting, tasting and marking—up to 20 points for taste, 10 for looks (*la présentation*) and 10 for originality. Then, in a deliberate reference to the Olympics, the three

**BY RUDOLPH CHELMINSKI ◆ PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAY CHERNUSH**

Among the delicacies served up in O'Grady's fish presentation are fennel "tartes Tatin" (bottom, left), round potato and spinach napoleons, slices of roasted sea bass, and olive-and-tomato tians.

winners were awarded gold, silver and bronze medals.

That was in 1999. When Tracy embarked on her second trip to Lyon earlier this year, she went as a contestant, not a spectator, and this time, thanks in part to her previous visit, she was ready for anything. Just before the two-day event began, she told me: "I feel like I've been training for this ever since I started in the restaurant business."

Tracy started in the restaurant business a dozen years ago. After graduating from Canisius College in her hometown of Buffalo, New York, she talked her way into an entry-level kitchen job. She lacked professional experience, but she worked hard, learned fast and within a few years had risen to the position of deputy cook, or sous-chef, at Kinkead's, a fashionable dining spot in Washington, D.C. One day she read a magazine article about the Bocuse d'Or. Not long after the Eurexpo Center opened in Lyon, its top brass asked local restaurateur Paul Bocuse, the grand seigneur of haute cuisine, for advice on how to promote their biannual International Food Trade Exhibition. As easily as that, the idea of a cook-off named after Bocuse was born. "Hey," Tracy thought to herself, "I can do that."

She may be slight of stature but when Tracy O'Grady decides to do something, only a fool would get in her way. She spent hours preparing and photographing elaborate dishes to impress a selection committee. Then she took part in two qualifying cook-offs (winning one and placing second in the other) and ended up being chosen over more than 100 outstanding chefs as America's official candidate for the 2001 Bocuse d'Or. Next came the trip to Lyon to check out the action, then back to Washington to get ready.

Over the next two years, Tracy continued putting in long hours at

While onlookers swarm around their cramped kitchen, O'Grady and her assistant focus on executing the painstaking game plan they have practiced to perfection.

Kinkead's while also, in effect, training for a culinary marathon. The Bocuse d'Or organizers had prescribed the raw ingredients each contestant would have to work with in 2001: one 35-pound baby lamb, skinned, and two five-pound sea bass. But before she could even think about creating a menu with those ingredients, Tracy had to find and train someone to be her *commis*, or helper.

Each competing chef is allowed one commis. But because the Bocuse d'Or committee knows some smart aleck might be tempted to hire a master chef masquerading as a novice, it stipulates that the commis must be under 21. For the better part of a year, then, Tracy trained Melanie Parker, a green kid fresh out of a cooking school in Maryland. Within a few months, Melanie could sauté, braise and flambé with the best.

By that time, Tracy had begun to zero in on a knockout menu. This is the one she ended up with:

◆ Sea bass fillets, filled with a mousse of bass, scallops and cèpe mushrooms, then poached, seared and roasted, and topped with Well-

The American team transported most of its ingredients to Lyon, but O'Grady, right, and her helper, Melanie Parker, left, still have to shop for fresh vegetables.

fleet and Manila clam sauce. Garnishes: caramelized fennel upside-down tarts ("tartes Tatin"); napoleons of Idaho potatoes and wilted garlic spinach; oven-dried tomato-and-black-olive tians (molds).

◆ Baby lamb four ways: rack of lamb with sun-dried tomato crust; loin wrapped in a fenneled lamb sausage; leg spiced with cumin and roasted; and lamb consommé with lamb ravioli and tiny vegetables. Garnishes: chick pea, olive and potato tarts; eggplant, red and yellow pepper tians; broccolini scented with thyme and garlic.

Before she could do anything else, Tracy had to improve her butchering skills, something she'd never been required to do at Kinkead's. After that, she needed to practice her menu to perfection, which meant preparing it over and over again.

One way or another things came together, and on a drizzly Sunday morning last January, Tracy and Melanie arrived in Lyon. They were followed by a retinue of 100 or so supporters that included Tracy's boss and chief fund-raiser, Bob Kinkead, and her mother, Connie O'Grady, together with other family and friends, various food professionals and clients of the Washington restaurant.

The drawing of lots had assigned Tracy and Melanie to cooking station Number One for the second and final day of the contest. "Did you see those stations?" she asked me that first evening in a taxi after her inspection tour at the Eurexpo Center. "They're so small. But we'll make it work."

She sat back for a while, silent and reflective. No one from the Americas, North or South, she knew, had ever placed better than eighth in the competition. Only once, in fact, had a non-European even placed among the top three. That was in 1989, when a woman, Luxembourg's Léa Linster, won the gold and William Wai of Singapore took the bronze.

"You know what my great weakness is?" Tracy suddenly asked. Aha, I thought. Here it comes—she's having a panic attack. But no. "Peanut butter," she said. "Chunky or creamy, doesn't matter. I just dip the bread right into the jar."

On the first day of the cook-off, Japan occupied the station Tracy would be using the next day. The rest of the lineup continued with Luxembourg, Ireland, France, the UK, Italy, Germany, Iceland, Brazil, South Africa and Finland—11 chefs in all. The pit was a blinding swarm of white—the 22 jurors (11 for fish, 11 for meat), the free-roaming proctors assisting the chefs with problems, innumerable experts, former Bocuse d'Or medalists, the contestants at work and Paul Bocuse himself, all of them suited up in white blouses and toques, the high, starched chef's hats. As the day progressed, a persistent garlic odor crept over the grandstand like a radioactive cloud. Down below, French professionals gazed with mesmerized fascination as the Japanese

In the stands at the Eurexpo Center, exuberant supporters cheering on America's team include, far left, Tracy O'Grady's aunt Linda Vullo and her mother, Connie.

**The Australian chef (top) places truffles and celeriac on his sea bass. The Swedish chef (middle) attacks his fish with gusto, while the Japanese team (bottom) uses a syringe with surgical precision to add finishing touches to their presentation.**

commis deftly wielded a syringe to embellish his chef's sea bass with ultrafine decorative motifs.

Jacky Marguin, chef and owner of a fine restaurant in the Lyon suburb of Les Echets and a member of the Bocuse d'Or organizing committee, ambled from station to station throughout the day, casting a practiced proctor's eye over the frantic activity. I asked him if he discerned any tendencies. "*Eh, bien*," he said, "it's good. The French look very good. Even the English look good."

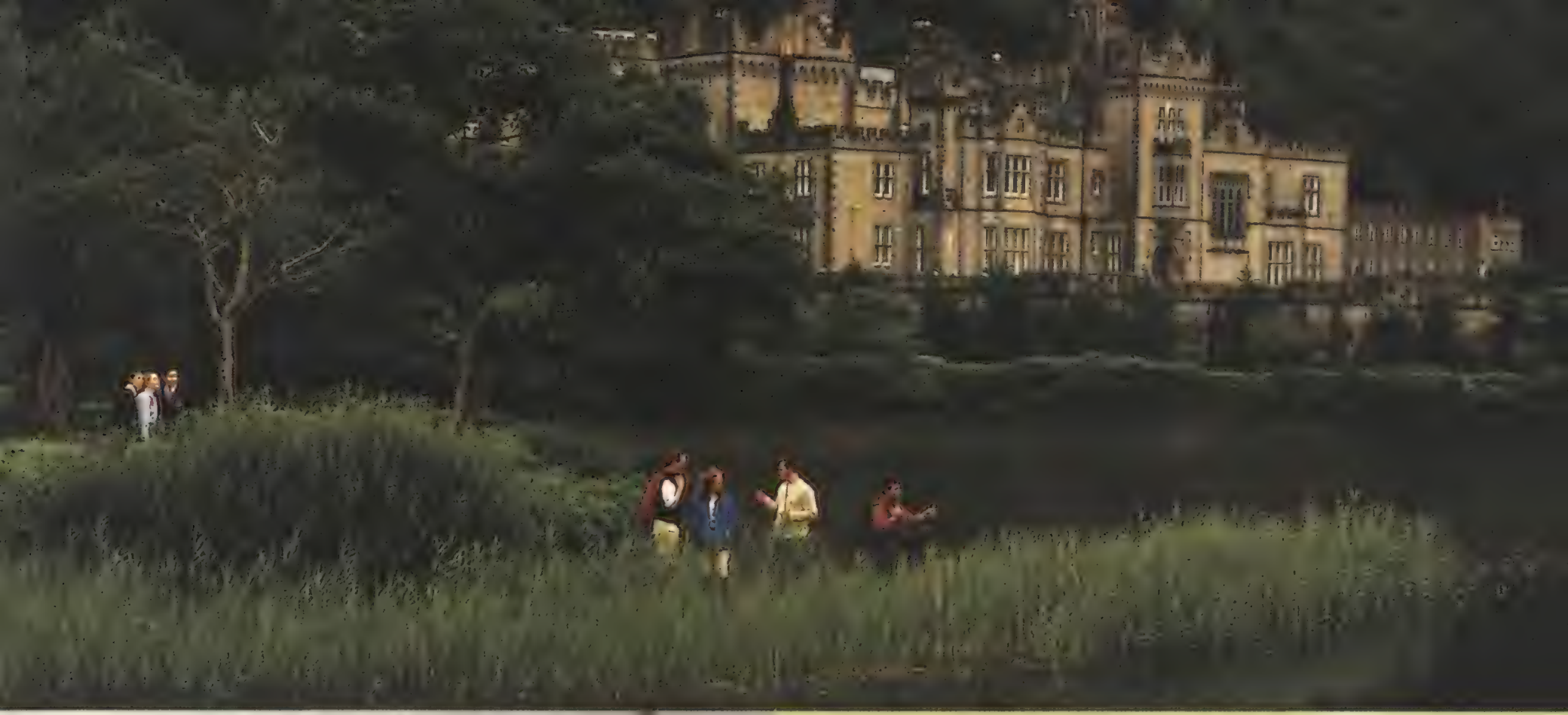
At that very moment, a clamorous blast of air horns, ululations and stamping feet announced the presence of a student delegation from the Lycée Hôtelier du Touquet, encouraging alumnus François Adamski, the official French contestant. He was a big-league guy, this Adamski. Although at 29 he was Tracy's junior by 4 years, he held five professional diplomas, had been in the trade for 12 years and had already participated in more than ten high-level competitions, winning eight. Nor did he let his old school down. If his meat dish, *agneau de lait en trois services*, was not unlike Tracy's idea of lamb four ways, his fish creation, an intricate "cake" of sea bass, burbot liver, lobster mousse and truffles, astonished professionals and spectators alike. At the end of the day, after the jurors had waddled off (each having done significant damage to 11 main dishes and their 33 garnishes), Adamski was the clear favorite.

Day two brought America's team, Tracy and Melanie, plus ten others—the teams from Switzerland, Austria, Mexico, Sweden, Canada, Australia, Denmark, Belgium, Spain and Argentina. Arriving at 6:15 A.M., Tracy and Melanie set up quickly, laying out an array of gear that included 11 frying pans, four sauté pans, half a dozen miscellaneous pots and a couple of enormous casseroles. That was only the big stuff. The small stuff consisted of everything from potato peelers to Post-its. On the left-hand wall of their cooking station, a printed sign showed Tracy's deadlines. Starting time: 9:00. Fish to be ready at: 2:00. Meat to be ready at: 2:35.

Tracy and Melanie inserted earplugs. At 8:58, a proctor arrived and held up two fingers. Tracy nodded, then solemnly shook hands with the proctor. "*Bonne chance*," he said, and at 9:00 Tracy whipped out a big, black-handled cleaver and attacked the lamb carcass as, simultaneously, Melanie filled a casserole with water. Fifteen minutes later, the Swiss chef next door laid into his lamb, and so it went on down the line at staggered intervals until, by 11:30, all 11 contestants were going at it full tilt.

On and on through the morning the American women labored, their gestures swift and sure. Deaf to the commotion around them, they never exchanged a word. For the better part of an hour and a half, Tracy broke the lamb carcass down from the unmistakable shape of a real animal into the lovely little dainty portions that diners are accustomed to seeing on their plates. Melanie chopped and peeled vegetables, rolled out dough, salted, peppered and generally got the garnishes into shape. A problem arose shortly after 10:00 when Tracy cut her thumb, but she whipped out a bandage and a rubber glove and carried on. Flushed now, sweating and slugging frequently on a bottle of mineral water, she was attacking the sea bass when Paul Bocuse appeared, an albescent deus ex machina, to shoo the crowd of journalists and TV cameramen who had gathered around *la petite Américaine*. "Leave her alone!" he cried. "Give her a break. You don't realize how hard this is."

The crowd dispersed, but within five minutes formed again. That's journalists. Up in the stands with the American contingent, a booster in a



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# Ireland

*Awaken to a different world*

blouse and toque was trying to get a cheering section going. Standing at the foot of the United States delegation, he waved Old Glory and chanted: "Tracy! Tracy! USA! USA!" His companions briefly responded with a few halfhearted chants, then, embarrassed, fell silent. Above and to the left of them, the Canadians were pumped up. "Go Chris go!" they screamed in chorus, clanging a ship's bell and rhythmically stamping their feet. (It almost worked. Christopher Mills eventually finished fifth.)

Down with the mob in front of Tracy's station, a woman who worked at Kinkead's asked me to pass on a message in French: "Tell the maître d' the plates were cold yesterday." I did, and the maître d'hôtel shrugged. He knew. Cold or lukewarm dishes were one of the Bocuse d'Or's bedeviling problems. What with the laying-out on platters for the *présentation*, the display to the press, the official photograph and then the serving of individual portions, so much time passed that it was impossible to get the exquisite creations into the jurors' august mouths piping hot.

And they were exquisite, the creations. One after the other, the contestants took infinite pains to build their complex inventions, lay them lovingly, artistically, onto the platters and watch them depart on the long route to the serving table and then at last onto individual plates (probably cold by now) to each juror for *dégustation*, whereupon they were uncere-

The American judge (top) samples an entry's aroma. Three other judges (above) size up the sea bass prepared by the Italian chef. In all, there are 22 judges, one from each competing country. Points are awarded on the basis of taste, originality and presentation.

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**Gold-medal winner François Adamski of France, center, exults with the runners-up.**

moniously poked at, sniffed and ripped apart, poor babies, by cruelly professional forks and knives. It was beginning to become apparent that Adamski, the French candidate, had been smart to make his fish into one large cake: a big single piece kept the heat better than 11 or 12 small portions.

By half past two, when she was all finished, Tracy was drawn and exhausted but she kept soldiering on, wiping the counters and cooking areas sparkly clean, then, looking around for something more to do, wiping down the walls of her station too. After four husky waiters had carried her meat dish away, she gave Melanie a big hug and climbed up into the stands to do the same for her mom and Kinkead. Then there was nothing to do but wait until her ten rivals of the day had gone through the same routine and the jurors had finished their tasting and gone off to tabulate their votes.

The prize ceremony began at 6 P.M. The hall was filled to the last seat now, and noisier than ever. Milking the sound system (drumrolls and suspenseful music) with professional dexterity, the master of ceremonies announced a series of consolation prizes before getting to the serious stuff. The first medalist was Hákon Mar Örvarsson of Iceland, who took the bronze, then silver went to Henrik Norström of Sweden. Tantalizing the audience with the time-consuming irrelevance of it all, the emcee engaged Bocuse in observations about these up-and-coming northerners before, at last, handing over the envelope with the name of the winner: Adamski of France.

Through the Gallic uproar that immediately ignited, amid the smiles and tears on the TV monitor, not a twitch could be seen on Tracy's face. Up in the stands, her mother was stoic. Bob Kinkead, who had sensed which way the judges were leaning, sat stony-faced. Then it was time to pack up and go home. Kinkead had a special fund-raising Super Bowl dinner to get ready. "One end of the spectrum to the other," he said.

For Tracy, there would be a couple of days more in France to relax and sightsee before returning once again to the kitchen in Washington. When the jurors' final tabulations were released, she learned that Adamski had won by a very wide margin, his score of 580 points light-years ahead of the Swede and Icelander tied at 532. She could console herself with finishing in the upper half, tied with Spain for tenth place at 471 points, ahead of such gastronomic powerhouses as Belgium, Switzerland and Japan. Not bad. Not bad at all. But it was almost as if she had known she would finish down in the rankings. She was in a thoughtful, self-critical mood as she tidied up her station.

"I guess maybe I don't cook Bocuse d'Or style," she confided. "Everything is so . . . so *perfect*. I guess I'm not a perfect chef, but I tried to stay true to myself. Maybe winning here isn't me, but this has made me a better cook, I know that. I'm really so glad I did it. So happy. And you know what? I've never won a cooking contest, but people always remember me."

Jaw set with determination, she went back to scrubbing, until everything was spotless. *La petite Américaine* wasn't leaving covered in glory, but she was leaving clean.

*Frequent contributor Rudolph Chelminski lives in France. He profiled wordsmith Anu Garg in December 2000. Kay Chernush's images of synesthetes ran in February 2001.*

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Calder's huge, brightly hued stabiles dominate the hillside outside his studio in France.

# Calder's

## PLAYFUL GENIUS

BY 1973, THE YEAR ALEXANDER CALDER TURNED 75, IT would have been quite a feat for this incomparable American sculptor to remember all the cities, countries and continents where his art was located. His colorful and boldly shaped mobiles and stabiles were ubiquitous. Scores of them were hanging from the ceilings of banking halls and airport terminals or sited by countless corporate headquarters, government agencies and universities. Calder's *Circus*, the "tiniest show on Earth," as the *New York Times* once put it, attracted crowds whenever and wherever it was shown—as it still does at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art. And there were bronzes, wood carvings, paintings and drawings, prints, jewelry, kitchen utensils, theater sets, tapestries, rugs, a painted BMW and who knows what else scattered around the world.

WITH PAPER AND PAINT, WIRE AND WOOD, THE RENOWNED SCULPTOR CREATED A NEW VOCABULARY FOR MODERN ART

BY PHYLLIS TUCHMAN

WHEN ASKED TO NAME HIS favorite artwork or project, Calder never hesitated, even though he had thousands of choices from a career spanning five decades. He readily cited the acoustic panels he executed in 1952 for the Aula Magna, a concert hall on the grounds of the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas. Ironically, the large ovoid shapes that seem to float across the ceiling and hover near the side walls of this enchanting auditorium remain among the least-known aspects of the artist's legacy. Calder got the commission the way he got so many others—with a bit of bravura. Architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva wanted to put a mobile on the terrace outside the Aula Magna; Calder wanted something grander on view indoors. With the confidence of Babe Ruth pointing to where he would hit his next home run, the sculptor said he could design the acoustic panels for the concert hall.

For half a century, upon entering the auditorium when it's illuminated by houselights, concertgoers have been able to feel as if they have entered a multihued, three-dimensional abstract painting. With the hall darkened, the 30-foot elements, which range from deep blue to light yellow, resemble clouds scattered across a night sky.

Alexander Calder was born July 22, 1898, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Alexander Sterling Calder, a second-generation sculptor, and his painter wife, Nanette. With both a grandfather, Alexander Milne Calder, and a father who were acclaimed artists—the former created the colossal statue of William Penn perched atop Philadelphia's City Hall and the latter carved the figure of George Washington on the arch in New York's Washington Square—you might say Alexander III was to the manner born. But according to his older sister, Margaret, the family lived "in crowded, unattractive quarters with little money and less security. [Mother] could never be sure where or when Father's next commission would come."

For a variety of reasons, the family of four was constantly on the move. Before he was 17, Calder had lived in at least ten different houses and apartments in cities from Philadelphia to Pasadena. Warmhearted and fun-loving, young Sandy, as he was called, had his own workroom by the age of 10. Though the two children got a weekly allowance of only 5 cents, they earned extra money modeling for their parents at the handsome rate of 12½ cents an hour. Sandy was about 4 when he posed for his father's 49-inch-high bronze of a nude boy, *Man Cub*, now in the collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

From an early age, Calder was intrigued by animals and pageantry. Being precocious and nimble-fingered,

**Amid a maze of materials, tools and works in progress, Calder focuses on the project at hand in his airy Roxbury studio in 1963.**

he could, moreover, make things to fit his fancy. He created a lion's cage by trimming a milk crate with ribbons and transformed a packing box into a castle with a gated drawbridge, peopling it with royalty bedecked in his specially designed sheet-brass and sealing-wax crowns. The talented boy also improvised several Noah's arks and made a miniature dog and duck from brass sheet as presents for his parents. Among his favorite tools was a gift from his sister—a 70-cent pair of pliers. (Years later, Calder would purchase Bernard pliers by the box load and claim he never left home without a pair.) Following a big storm in Pasadena in 1908, he gathered copper scrap left on the street by repairmen and with it made jewelry for his sister's dolls, umbrella frames and a circle C branding iron like the ones that intrigued him in Oracle, Arizona, where the family last lived. As an artist, he branded his own work with a large *C* intertwined with an *A*.

In 1915 Calder enrolled at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey, to study mechanical engineering. Classmate William B. F. Drew later recalled how Calder could "look at the sheet with the problem, sketch the answer on it and put it in his inside pocket . . . to him the solution would be done in two or three steps that took the average boy six or seven." According to Drew, Calder loved puns, and in a Stevens yearbook, another friend mentioned Sandy's "mischievous" grin, and called him "one of the best natured fellows there is." As for practical problems, the young Calder had some ingenious solutions. If, say, he noticed a hole in a sock, he'd cover the spot on his leg with India ink.

After graduation, Calder worked alternately over the next two years as a draftsman, adviser to a lumber trade journal, efficiency expert, insurance company investigator, traveling salesman for motorized garden equipment, fireman on a ship and store clerk in a logging camp. Never forgetting things that intrigued him back then, the mature artist adapted them to new purposes. He strung cables and pulleys, for instance, about his studio so he could move mobiles and other works as if he were hauling logs. And in countless gouaches, he seemed to be recollecting the riveting image he had experienced on one of his sailing voyages: early in the morning on a calm sea off Guatemala, he had seen "the beginning of a fiery red sunrise on one side and the moon looking like a silver coin on the other."

In 1923 Calder returned to New York. Having relished the drawing

PP. 82-85 PEDRO E. GUERRERO (2)

classes he had taken the year before from a friend of his father's, he enrolled at the Art Students League to study with another family friend, Ashcan artist John Sloan. Calder's other instructors, including George Luks and Guy Pène du Bois, were among the best America had to offer.

Amid the mayhem of models, easels and sketch pads, Calder, who reportedly was always joking around, created cartoons. When painting, he loved to convey the excitement and open spaces of big tops and cityscapes, his favorite subjects. He'd spend days, even weeks, at Coney Island, the circus, horse shows, boxing matches and the Central Park and Bronx zoos to get the drawings he was doing for the *National Police Gazette* just right. In 1926 the 28-year-old published *Animal Sketching*, an instruction manual peppered with sage advice. "Animals think with their bodies to a greater extent than man does," he wrote, and reminded readers that

The artist and a signature work were caught at rest in the foundry in Tours, France, where his large stabiles were fabricated.

"Cows make splendid and inexpensive models" and that when using photographs, they should consult more than one, "as photos are often misleading as to essential features."

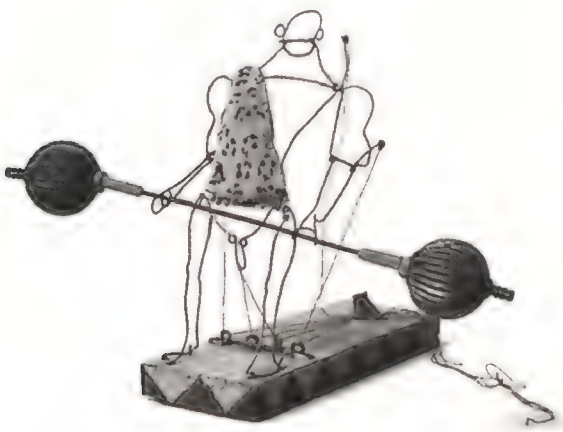
Following his parents' example, Calder wanted to complete his art education in Paris. With the promise of a monthly stipend of $75 from his mother, he sailed for Europe in July 1926 as a crew member on a cargo boat. By the end of August, he had a temporary studio in Montparnasse. Besides taking drawing classes, he designed toy animals with the hope of generating an income from them. He also developed an idea that he had the year before when he created a sundial rooster out of wire. Now he bent and twisted wire into the first of several nearly life-size portraits of Josephine Baker, the popular African-American entertainer. The slender, stylized figures resembled three-dimensional line drawings suspended in space.

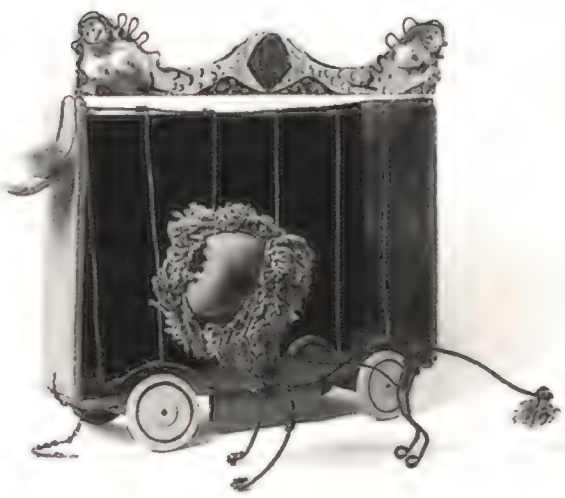
Calder was not in Europe long before he returned briefly to New York. Shuttling back and forth between the United States and Europe became his modus operandi, and for the rest of his life, he would try to spend parts of every year in both France and America. By the time he could afford any luxury he desired, he was set in his ways. However, when critic John Russell asked if anything was different

PEDRO E. GUERRERO (2)

about his life, he replied, yes . . . now he could buy a ticket to New York without worrying.

Back in Paris, Calder began staging his *Circus*—an outgrowth of his passion for toys—for friends and their guests. Someone brought along poet Jean Cocteau one evening; another time, Paul Fratellini, the legendary clown, came along. Calder fashioned his performers from such odds and ends as bits of wire, felt, wood, leather, paper, string, and even nuts and bolts. At first, he packed the miniature cast and its props into two valises. A few years later, he needed five suitcases to store the 70-odd cast members he had created—acrobats, a sword swallower, trapeze artists, a lion tamer, an ax and knife hurler—along with their props, cages and the circus ring in which many of them risked their lives. Occasionally, two wobbly ambulance attendants would be summoned to carry someone off on a stretcher.





WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, NEW YORK (2)

After announcing each act in bellowing tones, the artist manipulated the forms himself. Eventually, performances lasted about two hours and were accompanied by music from a Victrola. Guests, who had been sent linoleum-block invitations personally created by Calder, munched on peanuts as they sat on bleachers he had improvised from champagne crates.

With animal sculptures and toys in vogue on both sides of the Atlantic, Calder met success on several fronts. After exhibiting some of his animated animal sculptures at a respected Parisian art gallery in August 1927, he traveled to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, to show factory executives prototypes for his "Action Toys." Made from wooden door scraps, the animals—a kangaroo that hopped, a skating bear, a goldfish that swam and opened and closed its gills—became animated when pulled across a floor. The executives were favorably impressed and a deal was struck. For a publicity photograph three years later, Calder posed twirling a lasso above his head, with a herd of his manufactured bulls.

Remaining in the States, Calder performed his *Circus* many times. Unlike Paris, where creative personalities formed his audience, in New York, it was society figures who flocked to his shows. While in New York, Calder exhibited new, larger wire sculptures, and carved from wood a caravan of smaller-sized animals and figures. Among the works from this period are several whose allegorical and classical subjects recall statues by his father. Before turning 30, Calder also began work on an astonishing series of wire portraits of popular personalities—Calvin Coolidge, Jimmy Durante—and of new friends such as artist Fernand Léger. Back in France, he became acquainted with the Spanish Surrealist Joan Miró, and still looking for monetary success, hustled himself shows in Paris, New York and Berlin—all told, four in four months.

Until he met Louisa Cushing James on the boat back to New York in the summer of 1929, Calder looked like a confirmed bachelor. But he became smitten with the grandniece of Henry and William James, and courted the blue-eyed beauty from two sides of the ocean. While his father thought her "rather reserved and undemonstrative," his sister found her "quiet but gay . . . always ready for a trip or new adventure." A woman of means, she had a small inheritance on which the two could live modestly. They married in January 1931.

The year that Calder met his future wife also marked a turning point in his career. A few months before his nuptials, a friend brought him to the Montparnasse studio of Piet Mondrian, who had seen his *Circus* one night and wanted to meet him. Mondrian, a gaunt aesthete who shared with Calder a love of dancing, had transformed his atelier into a dramatic environment, with high white walls, light streaming through two large windows, a red Victrola and a series of colored rectangles attached to the walls. It was a place where Calder came to realize that "though I had heard the word 'modern' before, I did not consciously know or feel the term 'abstract.'" The American suggested to the Dutchman that he somehow animate the blocks of yellow, red, blue, black, and white paper. Using the language of engineering, Calder pictured how they could "oscillate in different directions and at different amplitudes." Mondrian, a bit taken

**Fascinated by the spatial relations, balance and movement of the circus, Calder created his own miniature version in 1926, including a wiry weight lifter and a woolly maned lion.**

Off to shop, Calder—who fashioned many of their cooking utensils (above)—and his wife, Louisa, leave their retreat in France.

aback by Calder's idea, demurred. But for Calder, the experience was transforming. "The visit to Mondrian gave me the shock that converted me. It was like the baby being slapped to make his lungs start working."

Returning to his own studio, Calder began to paint again. For subject matter, he turned to outer space, feeling cosmic imagery had an abstract character. For him, circles and arcs resembled planets in orbit—monochromatic grounds had the look of infinity. After a few weeks, he adapted those ideas to three dimensions, and never looked back.

For the next four and a half decades, Calder mostly made sculpture. He never tired of finding new ways to suspend—from linear bars, circular tracks and triangular towers—every conceivable combination of spheres, disks, cones and other solid geometrical forms, as well as flat biomorphic shapes painted in primary colors. Years later, in a credo-like statement, he explained, "I feel there's greater scope for the imagination in work that can't be pinpointed to any specific emotion. That is the limitation of representational sculpture. You're often enclosed by the emotion, stopped."

IN HIS PRIME, CALDER CLAIMED to make 20 or 30 mobiles a year. "I begin," he once said, "at the small ends, then balance in progression until I think I've found the point of support. This is crucial, as there is only one such point and it must be right if the object is to hang or pivot freely. I usually test out this point with strings to make sure before bending the wires. The size and angle

PEDRO E. GUERRERO (2)

# If you're over 60, you should know the warning signs of osteoporosis.

## Unfortunately, there aren't any.

The fact is, nearly 40% of women in their sixties have osteoporosis. Your risk may vary but it does increase with age. A thin build, or Caucasian or Asian descent, can increase your risk of osteoporosis. But early on, osteoporosis is often a silent disease, so you may not see any signs. However, eventually it can lead to broken bones or the disfiguring dowager's hump. The good news is, if osteoporosis is detected early enough, its effects may be prevented.

A simple, painless exam called a Bone Density Test can measure the health of your bones. Ask your healthcare professional if this test should be part of your health evaluation, like your mammogram and Pap smear. Because if your bones are thinning, there are treatment options that can help strengthen them, and help you continue to lead an active, independent life.

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of the shapes and how to use them is a matter of taste and what you have in mind." When asked how he knew a work was finished, he would blithely say, "When it's time to eat."

CALDER CALLED HIS FIRST SOLO show in Paris featuring abstract constructions in wood and wire, "Volumes—Vectors—Densities." The objects were, in his terms, "spheres, arcs, densities, and stopped motions." Works that swayed led to others turned by hand cranks and, in time, to pieces operated by motors. "Just as one can compose colors or forms," the artist stated in 1933, "so one can compose motions."

With his fine mind, Calder programmed the revolutions that individual forms in his sculptures would take. And during the late 1930s he was delighted when told that Albert Einstein had spent 40 minutes watching the 90 unique cycles of *A Universe*, one of his works on view in New York. Still, people who can't make heads or tails of $E=mc^2$ respond just as wholeheartedly to a Calder. As Léger, who wrote the preface to his American friend's 1931 show, noted, "It's serious without seeming to be."

Calder never lost the capacity to make friends from all walks of life and all camps of art. He carefully acknowledged help received—but had a habit of adding a punch line at the expense of the other party. For example, he always credited the Dadaist Marcel Duchamp for proposing the term "mobile" for the American's art that moved. Nevertheless, when describing the day in his studio when the elegant conceptualist proposed the term for both movement and motif, Calder never failed to note that the fastidious Frenchman had gotten his fingers full of paint when he touched a sculpture that had not yet dried.

Sensitive to the rise of fascism and wanting a peaceful environment in which to raise children, Sandy and Louisa Calder returned to the United States in the early 1930s to find a home. Two hours north of New York City, on Painter Hill Road in Roxbury, Connecticut, they discovered a dilapidated 18th-century farmhouse, complete with a ruined barn, ice house and 18 acres. It was theirs for $3,500. Wooden crates used to transport their belongings from France were transformed by Calder into shelves and cupboards in the same way he once conjured up palaces and cages. And over the years, the ground floor became festooned with the metal serving and cooking utensils that Calder made for his wife. Their bedroom was similarly decorated with the pins, necklaces and earrings he also enjoyed creating.

His studios, of course, were always cluttered. Work hung from the ceiling, sat on tables and was stored in corners. The artist had an unorthodox filing system. Richard Marshall, curator of a Calder exhibition currently touring Japan, remembers how, while working on another show back in 1975, he noticed on the floor of the Roxbury studio an element from a "snowflake" sculpture. Says Marshall, "I pointed to it and asked what it was. Calder got a piece from somewhere else and another part from another corner and put it all together. It was *Roxbury Flurry*, a classic white mobile from 1948. And in 1975, it was still on the floor."

Louisa Calder once summarized their lifestyle in Roxbury for a reporter: "I'd garden and he'd make things for the house and that's what we did." After rising early and going to the studio, Calder would return to the main house for a simple lunch with a glass or two or even three of red wine. If he'd been working on a mobile, he'd probably spend the afternoon painting gouaches. He also remained a master toymaker—creating a dollhouse with elevators for his two daughters. For his mother's 90th birthday, he made an astonishing confection of layered olive-oil and beer cans topped by four tiny mobiles.

Louisa Calder enjoyed cooking for family and friends. One of her deli-

**A prolific painter of brilliantly colored gouaches, turning out more than 5,000 in his lifetime, Calder routinely worked at his easel in the afternoon. *Black Ringed Blue et Alia* is from 1964.**

PEDRO E. GUERRERO

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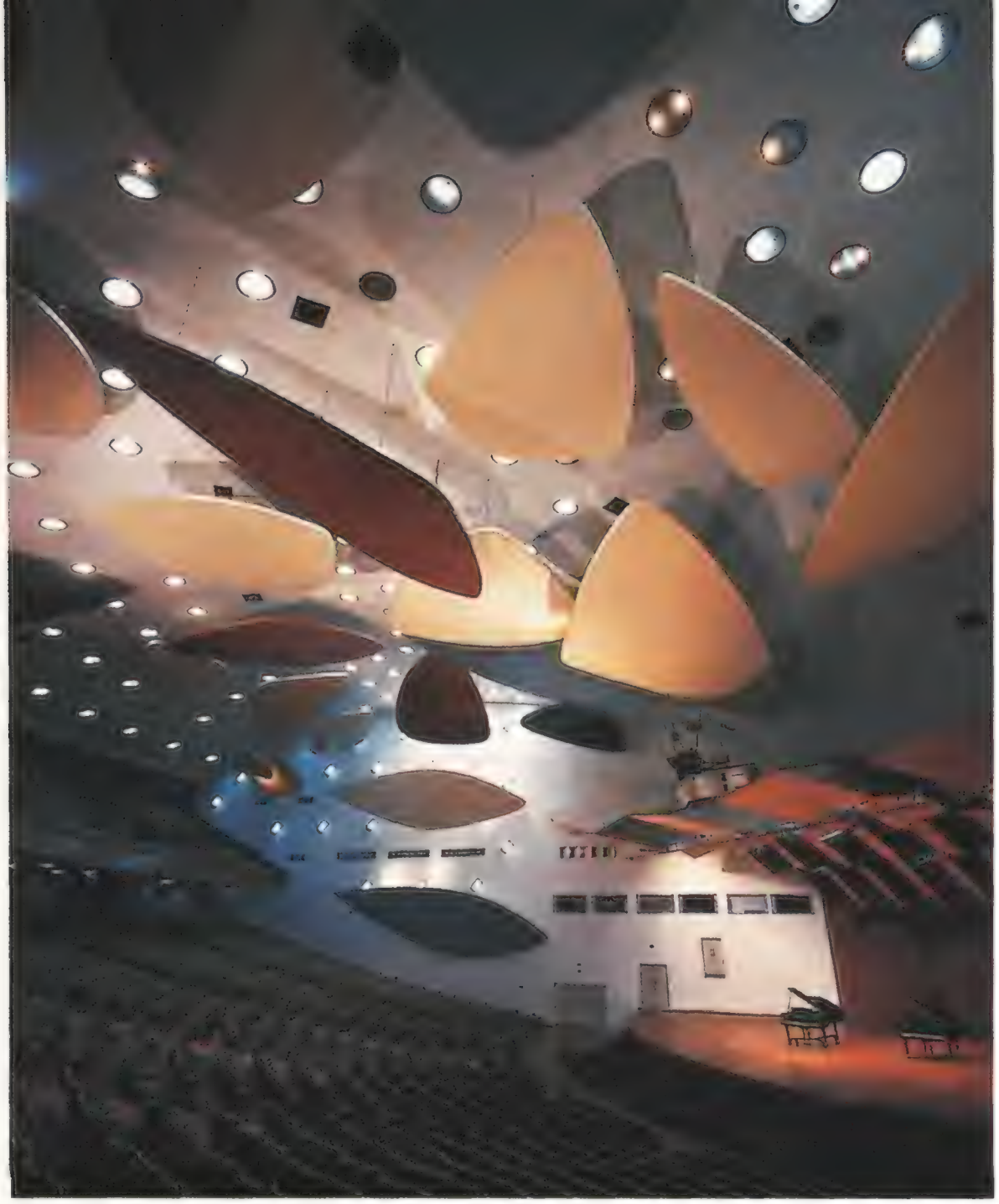

**The colorful biomorphic forms of Calder's 1952 plywood acoustic panels for the Aula Magna concert hall in Caracas appear to float like clouds above the auditorium seats.**

cacies was butter she made out of quince from their orchard. Calder gained weight, kept it on and developed a distinct manner of casual dress. By 1962, journalist Jean Davidson, who had married Sandra, the older of the Calders' daughters, described his father-in-law as follows: "A big, two-hundred-twenty-pound man, he will be wearing either a red or dark blue flannel shirt and a pair of dungarees, with a large leather belt fastened by a hammered buckle of his making. He is a bit untidy, rather than sloppy, always negligently at ease. . . . there is an assurance, a spontaneity, a placid weight in the gaze, that contradicts his costume."

Louisa grew a wide range of flowers, and still had time to hook rugs from her husband's designs. When he wanted to dance, she would accompany him on her accordion. And he enjoyed his neighbors and they, him. Of the times they spent together, playwright Arthur Miller recalled, "The sun shone on his life. What he seemed to want most was to see or hear something delightful. . . . His hands were so deft and unhesitatingly sure. He seemed more like someone at play than an artist." One afternoon, when asked about the top of a barn belonging to Miller and his actress wife, Marilyn Monroe, Calder responded with great humor, "That's Marilyn's hot tin roof."

THE CALDERS REMAINED RENTERS in France until they acquired property in 1953 in Saché, near Tours. Surrounded by vineyards, it became a family compound, with several studios and a terrace for displaying outdoor sculptures. Many of Calder's stabiles, the subject of an exhibition opening this month at the Storm King Art Center, an hour north of New York City, were made near Saché. Because so many of these behemoths were commissioned for specific sites—world's fairs, Olympic Games—few have ever been seen together. Most retrospectives feature maquettes a few inches high and photographs of the real thing. For the first time, at Storm King, the real thing will be on view. They are an astounding lot—true feats of engineering, with an architectural presence that draws viewers to them.

Calder, it is clear, marched to his own drummer; no 24 hours were ever alike for him. There was always a new work, a visitor, a trip, another show. In many ways his life resembled the way Jean-Paul Sartre in 1946 famously explained that "what [a mobile] may do at a given moment will be determined by the time of day, the sun, the temperature or the wind."

When Calder died of a heart attack on November 11, 1976, his retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art had been on view for a month. Celebrities had been at the opening gala dinner; hundreds of visitors had poured into the galleries daily; and hundreds of thousands had watched coverage of the show on television. The artist was at the top of his powers. He belonged to a rare species—a person who could touch the lives of young and old, rich and poor, the man, woman and child on the street, or the President of the United States. Learning of Calder's death, Gerald Ford said, "Art has lost a genius." Part of that genius was his ability to transform complex visual images into simple and direct works of art that possess the gift of making us smile each time we see them.

*Phyllis Tuchman has been an admirer of Calder's art since seeing the 1964 retrospective at New York's Guggenheim Museum.*

PAOLO GASPARINI/FUNDACION VILLANUEVA, CARACAS

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GIVE MARSHA OGILVIE SOME BONES, AND SHE'LL TELL YOU THE WHO, WHAT AND HOW . . . AND SHE DOES IT ALL WITH HER HANDS

# Seeing fingers decipher bones

MARSHA OGILVIE'S HANDS CAREFULLY, RESPECTFULLY, LIFT THE SKULL from an elongate cardboard carton, and she says, "He's in good shape." In the carton is the rest of him, his vertebrae strung together like chunky beads, his ribs in a clear plastic bag, the heavy thighbones (femurs) and shinbones (tibias) on the bottom so as not to break the more fragile parts. Nothing is unusual about this scene in the osteology lab at the University of New Mexico's Maxwell Museum of Anthropology in Albuquerque. Human skeletons are cataloged and analyzed here every day. Nothing unusual.

Recently awarded a PhD in biological anthropology from the University of New Mexico, Ogilvie explains why she suspects the skull belonged to a male. Among other things, she says, "See this nice browridge, and these mastoid processes behind the ears? They're larger, they project farther than a female's." Here in the osteology lab that—over a period of 12 years—she apprenticed in, and later managed while studying for her master's and then her doctorate, no one is at all amazed that Ogilvie is blind.

From the carton, she fetches a tibia, smiles and says, "It looks to me like he wasn't a total couch potato." Her seeing fingers flutter over the smooth length of the bone and then the articular surface at the ends, with little holes like a hardened sponge, where it joins with the knee and the foot.

"The flatter the tibia is, and the more triangular in cross section, the more mobile the guy was," she says, "but you can't make any kind of real judgment based only on one bone. It's all too relative." Next to be checked is a femur. It is essentially cylindrical, but with a knob that fits into the hip, and along the rear of its length the bone extends out a bit in a long ridge. "This ridge

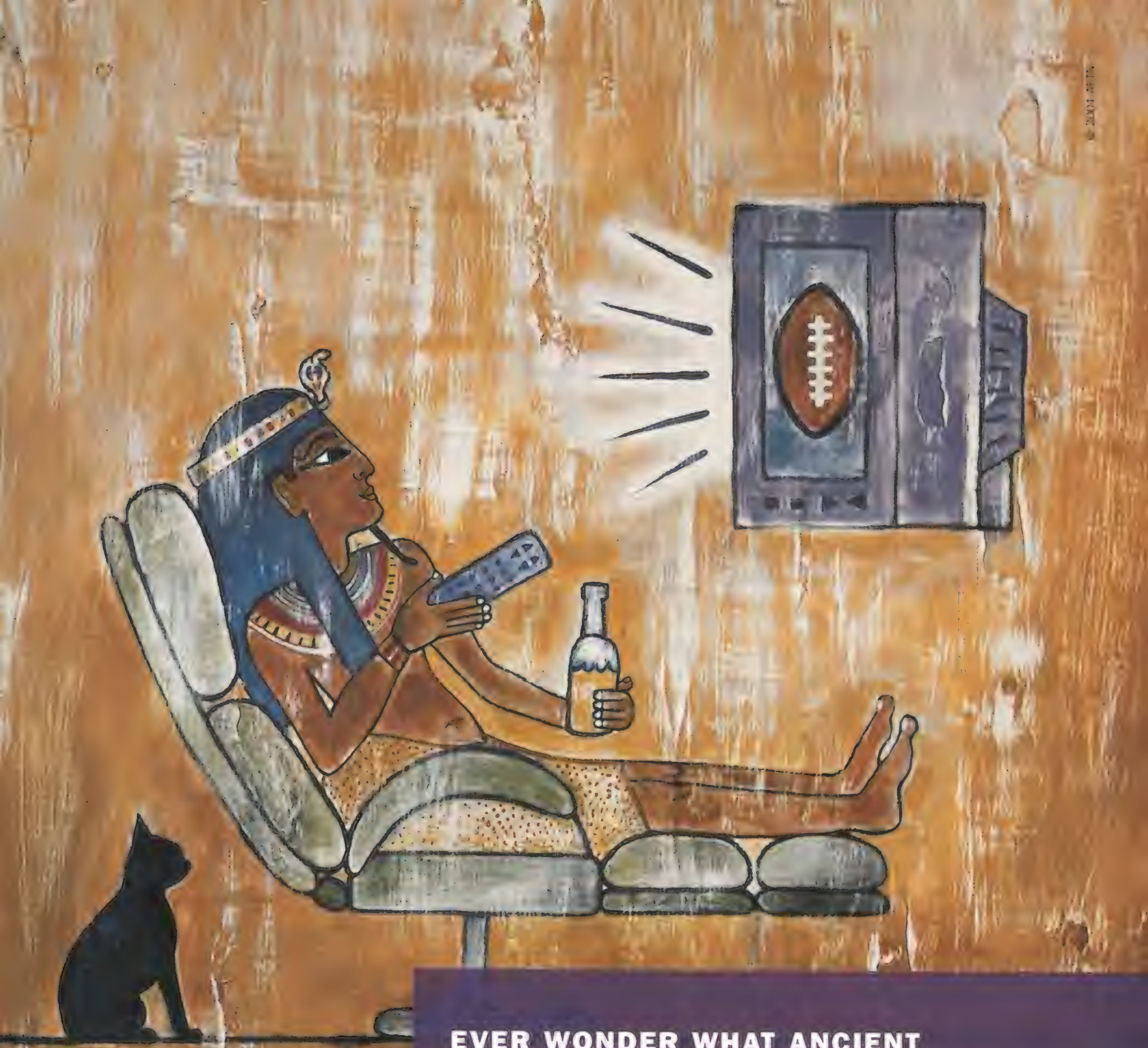
BY JAKE PAGE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUGLAS MERRIAM

In the Laboratory of Human Osteology at the University of New Mexico's Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, biological anthropologist Marsha Ogilvie uses only touch to study the bones of a 74-year-old woman who died of cancer.

means he was pretty mobile. Probably walked a lot."

Bone is living tissue, and it responds to stress by adding to the stressed area. Similarly, it gives up material if not used. Most of us do not have an image of ourselves as a skeleton, she says, and if we do, we don't think of our bones as malleable. But they are: bones tell stories. "You get to know something about people who you never met, and to a bone aficionado, that's really exciting."

For example, one of the greatest finds in human evolutionary studies was at Iraq's Shanidar Cave in the 1950s and '60s, when—in a series of excavations originally sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution—Columbia University's Ralph Solecki found the remains of nine mostly intact Neanderthals. One of them, called Shanidar 3, eventually fetched up at the UNM lab of paleoanthropologist and Neanderthal expert Erik Trinkaus. Long after everyone had pored over him, Ogilvie and a colleague pointed out that the poor soul had probably suffered from terrible lower back pain for a good part of his life.



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His lower (lumbar) vertebrae had been jammed together, which Ogilvie suggested was likely the result of some great stress, "maybe," she laughs, "from lugging oryxes around over his shoulder or something."

Even as she was working on other matters for her degree, Ogilvie nailed down another bit of insight into the life of Neanderthals. They evidently weren't all that great at foraging, even if they were indubitably stronger than your average bodybuilder down at the gym. She figured this out from analyzing almost 700 original Neanderthal teeth and replicas of fossilized teeth. If, in the course of your life, your body suffers systemic trauma—like high fevers or periods of starvation—it shows up as defects in the enamel of your teeth, not unlike the tree rings that are used to calculate the age of trees. The Neanderthal teeth Ogilvie studied showed the telltale signs of this kind of stress, which are called dental enamel hypoplasia, into adolescence and beyond. As hunters and gatherers, the brawny Neanderthals apparently had a difficult struggle.

In her PhD dissertation, Ogilvie focused on the shift from brawny hunter-gatherers to less brawny agriculturists. This time, instead of teeth, she looked at femurs.

It has been long theorized that when Stone Age hunting and gathering folk began to domesticate plants, it was the women who gave up the roving life of the forager, left hunting to the men and, at least some of the time, stayed home to look after the tender plants. Ogilvie wanted further proof, the kind of proof that is embedded in bones.

First, she sought out baselines of a purely hunter-gatherer society and of a purely agricultural one, and found an example of each. In southwest Texas, among bands of people who foraged during thousands of years almost exclusively for desert succulents such as agave and yucca, both men and women (and presumably children) ranged far and wide, gathering plants, firewood and the rocks they used to line their hearths. The thighbones of people from this culture—both men and women—showed the characteristic ridges of the highly mobile.

Ogilvie also looked at the remains of a people who lived in a large New Mexico pueblo until just before the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century. There, agriculture was intensively practiced—fields given over to beans, squash and maize. And there, male thighbones were almost as lacking in the signs of mobility as the women's. Together, the remains from these two cultures provided the baseline evidence Ogilvie was looking for—that the shift to agriculture could be linked to signs of lower mobility found on the thighbone.

*When, at 27, Ogilvie lost her sight, she figured her career in anthropology was not meant to be.*

At an opportune time, archaeologists turned up the remains of yet another society—this one in southwestern Arizona—that would further Ogilvie's study. These were the remains of a people who, some 3,500 years ago, were beginning to make the transition from foraging to farming. The remains came to light during work on Interstate 10. Ogilvie was summoned to the site (there is no time for delays in what used to be called salvage archaeology), and she obtained tribal permission to examine the bones noninvasively. She made cross-sectional tomographic scans of the femurs and bones of other limbs. As each scan was made, the bone was taken off to be reburied, in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which provides that tribes control the remains of their ancestral people.

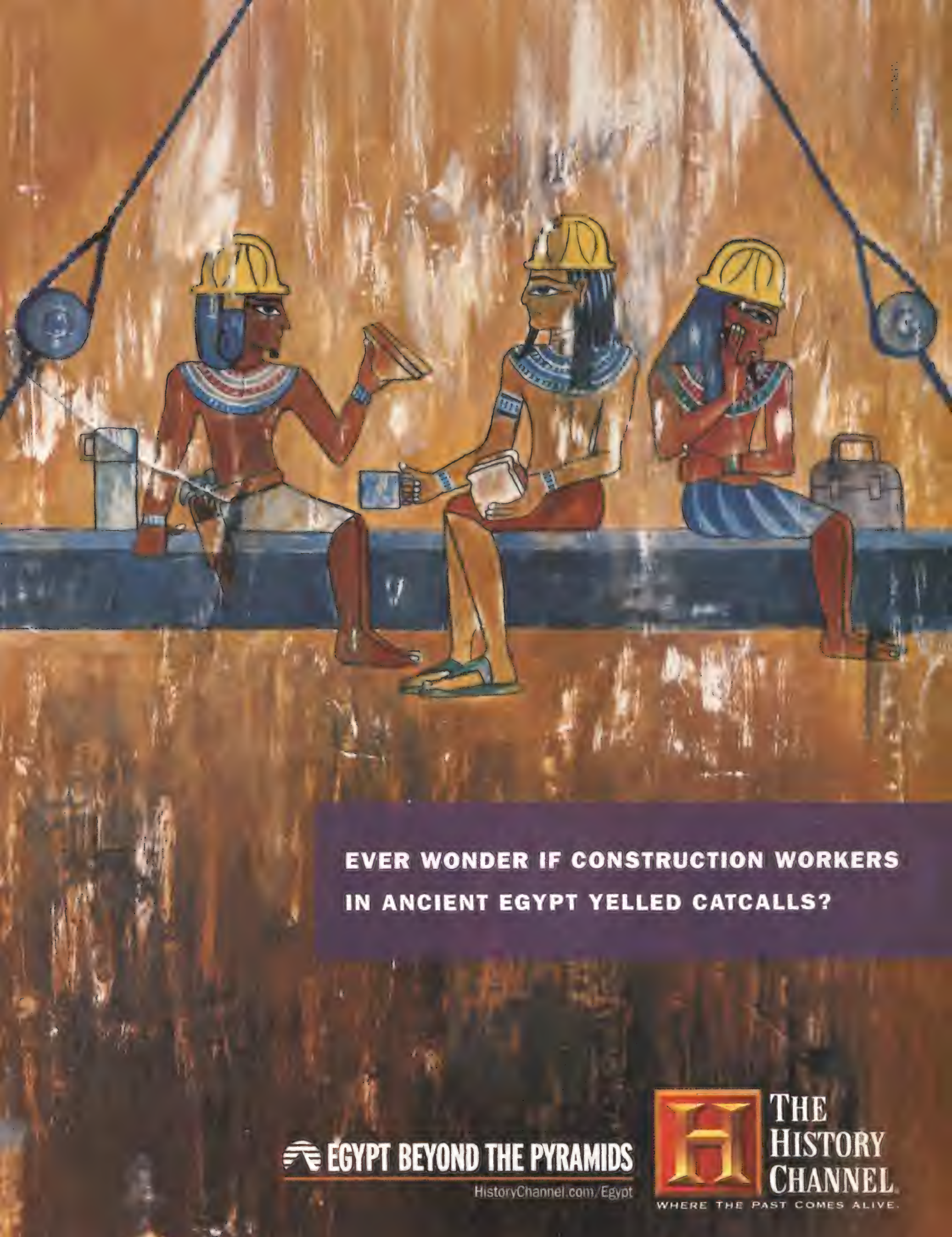
As a colleague described the images to her, Ogilvie found that only the male thighbones had pronounced ridges. They continued to spend much of their time hunting. Women's femurs, on the other hand, tended to be more doughnut shaped in cross section, less robust, the result of a more sedentary life.

Clearly, it was the women who gave up the wide-ranging existence of the forager and remained near settlements most of the time, presumably tending the plants or, as one might say, inventing agriculture. Now, if anyone questioned the importance of women in the agricultural revolution, Ogilvie had the proof. They had stayed home to start it.

Scientists say we have become "gracile" rather than "less robust." Ogilvie sometimes uses the word "wimpy." There is nothing wimpy about Ogilvie herself, except perhaps her modern bone structure. She had had to make the transition from seeing to not seeing when she was 27, the result of diabetes. Up to then, she had raced cars at rallies, collected fossils with family and friends, and was studying anthropology at Southern Methodist University. She was just one course shy of her undergraduate degree when she became blind.

"It was pretty fast," she says. "I preferred it that way, got over it without all that anticipation."

She figured her career in anthropology was not to be. For 12 or so years she was a housewife, volunteered in the local theater, took night courses. Then one summer she tried a gig in field archaeology sponsored by the Texas Archeological Society and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learned she had a knack for putting together the bones of such creatures as deer. She decided to have another try at being a biological anthropologist and moved to Albuquerque and the University of New Mexico. "'You can't do that,' people told me," she says, "and that jazzed me up. I said I'd be the one to decide what I can and can't do."

She signed up for a forensic course on a trial basis and discovered she could do the work. She ran into local dentist Steve Wagner, who taught part-time in the anthropology department, and asked him to teach her dental anatomy. "I had enough trouble learning this myself with vision," Wagner says. "That she could master this with just touch was amazing to me. She's a symbol of . . . well, of just never giving up."

Slowly she chipped away at a master's degree and then a doctorate. A university program provided readers, and she was always happy when it was a grad student in her field because, she says, "they could pronounce the words." She would tape lectures and each night reduce them to a few notes each on another tape. By the end, when she had to take comprehensive exams, she had boiled down the lectures in human biology, paleoanthropology, primatology, statistics, osteology and her other courses into six tapes that she played over and over before the exam.

Getting her degree was a long road, she says, and some professors thought she was crazy to be doing this. But they looked up year after year and found she was still there, slogging away, and became believers.

"Marsha would come to my office from the osteology lab with these tiny scraps of bone, and ask me to help her identify them," says Erik Trinkaus, now at Washington University in St. Louis. "I didn't have a clue. I'd say, 'Well, it's part of a brain case,'

**Works of art fill her apartment—many acquired long after she became blind.**

and she would say, 'I know *that*, but what is it?' And off she'd go, all the more determined."

Ogilvie had to work twice as hard to wrap her head around all this material, and sometimes, even with readers, tapes and all, it wasn't enough—for example, getting a handle on the double helix, DNA. So she made a model of it with pipe cleaners, and made models of other biochemical esoterica too. These helped her visualize, she says, and before long "some of the other students asked if they could study this stuff 'Marsha's way.'"

A good number of people evidently offer their bodies to science—which often means donating their skeletons to an osteology lab—and Ogilvie would frequently go with other students to the Office of the Medical Investigator, where the bodies go, to remove the soft tissue. "I believe being blind," Ogilvie says, "made that chore easier." Once cleaned, the bones go to the osteology lab for study. A fairly regular presence at the Office of the Medical Investigator led to numerous forensic assignments over the years, and Ogilvie says that, after a string of such assignments, "you sort of need a break." She does less of this work nowadays, but one turned up last year that was not of the grisly sort.

She was called on to help with an illegal alien problem in El Paso. When the immigration authorities there and elsewhere find Mexican citizens who have crossed the border illegally into the United States, the aliens are usually returned to their home country. If not tried and imprisoned for the crime of illegal entry, adults are simply escorted to the other side of the border. But if the aliens are underage—and accused of no other crime—the law says they must be reunited with their family.

The federal public defender's office in New Mexico called on Ogilvie to be an expert witness for a detainee whose age was in question. Even though the public defender had obtained the detainee's birth certificate and school records, a judge had declared the young man an adult—because a radiologist had testified, on the basis of x-rays showing the stage of fusion of the detainee's wristbone, that he was no younger than 19. The public defender managed to win on appeal, thanks in large part to a report from Ogilvie explaining that there is far too much variability in the human skeleton and growth patterns to judge age from an inspection of merely one bone.

Sometimes, Ogilvie argues, it's not so easy to make judgments about people even when you have lots of bones—or pieces of bone—to draw your conclusions from.

In recent years, a number of anthropologists and archaeologists have been looking at assemblages of human bones from early Pueblo times (around A.D. 1000), finding that they were broken and burned in characteristic ways. The patterns of marks and breakage seem much like bones of deer and other animals that were butchered and eaten. In other words, the researchers believe they are seeing signs of cannibalism. Today's Puebloan peoples, understandably, find these dark accusations about their ancestors appalling—and the

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## EGYPT BEYOND THE PYRAMIDS

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question of cannibalism has become a major controversy, reaching beyond the pages of academic journals to such publications as *U.S. News and World Report* and the *New Yorker*.

In her work as a skeletal biologist, Ogilvie has reviewed numerous prehistoric bone assemblages with the kinds of breakage patterns that have led other scientists to suggest cannibalism. But she has joined a group of researchers who question that assumption, arguing instead that there is another explanation: that the remains are those of individuals accused of, and executed for, practicing witchcraft.

The belief in witchcraft in Puebloan and other American Indian societies is long and well-documented. It surely existed in the Southwest prior to European contact, and is—according to many reports—prevalent to this day. Witches, it is believed, use supernatural powers to cause harm and illness and worse to others, and when someone is thought to be a witch, retribution is exacted. Though the kinds of punishment recorded in the academic literature vary, execution is not uncommon—and neither is dismemberment and burning. In some cases, it seems that to ensure that the accused witch would not come back from the dead, and that no other evil spirit could inhabit the body, the executors would utterly destroy the remains. The prehistoric bones that Ogilvie studied tended to be crushed and broken far beyond any requirement for food preparation. Instead of cannibalism, she believes many of the early Pueblo assemblages in question could be the results of communities ridding themselves of people they considered witches. This spring, she is participating on a panel with colleagues on either side of the debate at the annual conference of the Society for American Archaeology.

In the meantime, Ogilvie has been preoccupied with a far more benign matter: dinosaurs and museums. She is an avid moviegoer, a music fanatic who frequents blues bars, generally a person who gets out and around. But she has gotten into trouble trying to touch the exhibits in museums.

David Abraham and Rebekah Felix, both blind, feel their way through an audio and tactile tour of a sculpted bronze dinosaur developed by Ogilvie and her collaborator, Steve Wagner.

For the past year, she has been working on a solution with her dentist acquaintance, Steve Wagner, who is an accomplished anatomical sculptor. Together they have produced a two-foot-long version of an allosaur skeleton, each bone carved separately and assembled by Wagner based precisely on material from the New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science. He cast the skeleton in bronze, and it sits on a platform in one of the dinosaur halls at child-level, bearing seven buttons. Press the first button and a voice explains how you are about to receive a tactile tour of the allosaur. Touch the second button and the voice tells you to run your finger from the button up a raised line, then up a brass column to the dinosaur's head. There you will feel the teeth, and the jaw, and above that four sets of holes from the front to the back . . . and so on to the seventh button and the tip of the allosaur's tail.

The first day this prototype was installed, some blind children were brought in for the occasion. One little girl, about 7 years old, would not leave until she had run through the program the fourth time, carefully touching each of the allosaur vertebrae.

"Those kids," Ogilvie said, "had never seen a dinosaur." And she seemed to be equally pleased, maybe even more so, by the 10-year-old boy who showed up later. He could see, but when he pressed the first button, he closed his eyes and ran through the program using only his sense of touch.

Next to the allosaur is a small plaque with a quote from Helen Keller. It says, "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched—they must be felt with the heart."

*Jake Page is the author of several books on Southwestern Indians. Fellow New Mexican Douglas Merriam photographed our October 1998 story on vintage baseball.*

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JOHN TSANTES/SI (2)

This 1620 view of Paris is in a guidebook compiled by cartographer Martin Zeiller and dedicated in 1655 to Louis XIV. Zeiller traveled the provinces of France to create a work that includes 300 hand-colored engravings and is considered to be a comprehensive picture of the country at that time. Prominent in the city's landscape is the cathedral of Notre Dame, perched above the Seine, and the immense wall that encircled the Right Bank, buttressing it against invaders. At bottom left, a group of observers reveal the fashions and costumes of the time.

Inset: Some 1,050 aviators autographed an otherwise ordinary Wright brothers biography, taking it from mundane to invaluable. Signers include everyone from Wright contemporaries to Neil Armstrong.

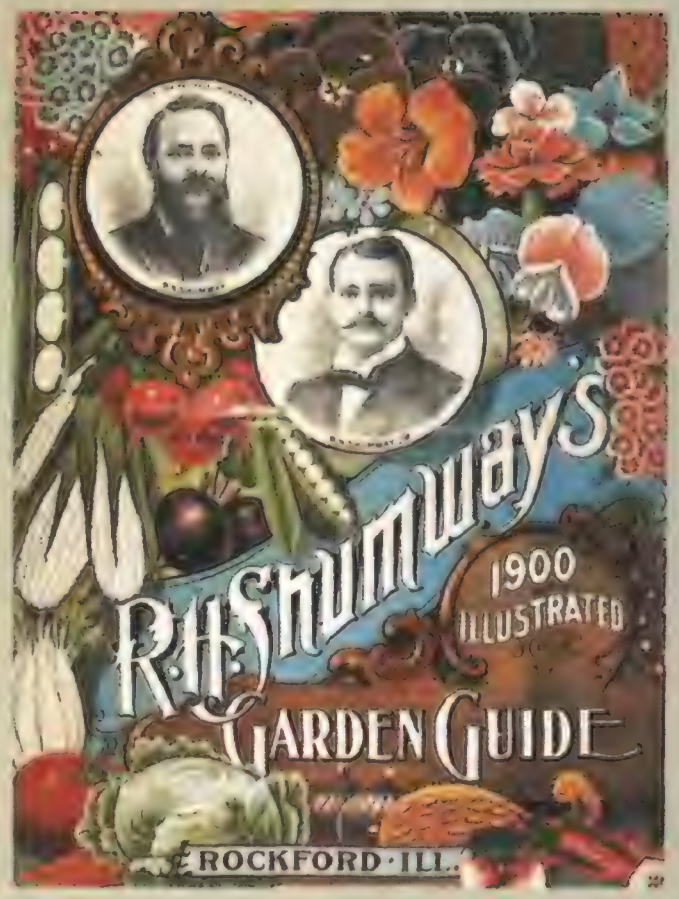
# The Pleasure of the Rare Book

TO HOLD IN YOUR HANDS A BOOK FROM another time, to feel its worn leather cover and to gently turn its soft, handmade pages, is a sensuous pleasure that few in this digital age experience. As a research editor for this magazine, I've had the opportunity to take part in what can only be called the ceremony of the rare volume. There's the quiet reverence of the temperature-controlled chamber, the muted light, and the silk-wrapped paperweight to hold open the book's pages. It's also the ceremony of preservation, a guarantee to generations to come. Indeed, it's both a privilege and a pleasure to have at my disposal the magnificent collections of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries. Here are housed one and a half million volumes, of which 40,000 are rare and valuable, all of them reflecting the diversity of subject matter to match the vast activities and disciplines of scholars at the Smithsonian. Now the public, too, can experience some 100 treasures from these collections May 16 through August 4 at the Grolier Club, at 47 East 60th Street in New York City, and on-line at www.sil.si.edu. The show, "Voyages: A Smithsonian Libraries Exhibition," will next travel to the National Museum of American History in May 2002. On these pages we share a selection of the show's splendors. —*Beth Py-Lieberman*

A most unusual woman, Maria Sibylla Merian journeyed to Suriname in 1697 and undertook the study of insects. Her vivid illustrations—above, the passionflower plays "host"—were the first to show the full life cycle and host plants of many moths and butterflies. Below: In his 1665 volume, Robert Hooke detailed the louse, which he drew while peering through an early microscope.

This 1675 prayer book (above), from the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum Library in New York City, bears high-style, baroque repoussé silver depictions of the Annunciation and the Visitation. It may have been an ornate Catholic response to the emerging Protestant-Calvinist sects of the time. Left: An early 20th-century Smithsonian ornithologist acquired this 1774 volume of John Coakley Lettsom's *The Naturalist's and Traveller's Companion* to better understand 18th-century collection methods.

A 29-foot scroll of London's 1851 Crystal Palace show is part of the Smithsonian Libraries' world's fair collection, dating from 1840 to the 1940s. Scientific instruments, mechanical devices, industrial and decorative arts—the splendors of such world's fairs—make for a wealth of primary sources for many fields of study.




Above: Trade literature keeps alive the memory of some 35,000 American industries like that of "Old Reliable Seedsman" R. H. Shumway, whose company in 1900 hawked the latest hybrids. Below: The National Air and Space Museum Library holds such fanciful lithographs as this one of a hydrogen balloon-powered expedition vehicle. The illustrations were provoked by what became known as The Great Moon Hoax, created in 1835 when the *New York Sun* reported a discovery of furry, winged men living on the moon.

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: OIPPS/SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION; MATT FLYNN;OIPPS/SI; JOHN TSANTES (4)

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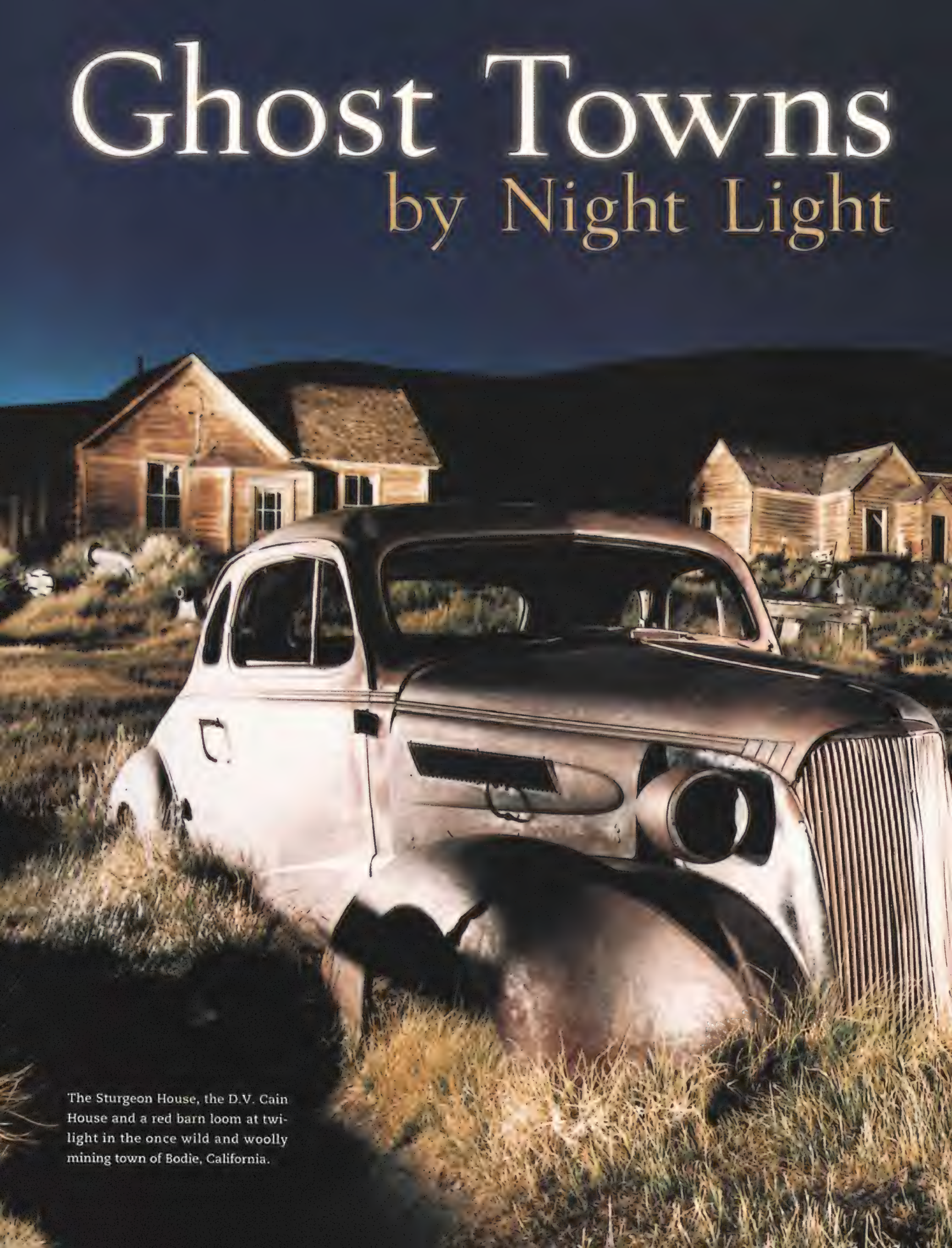
# Ghost Towns
## by Night Light



The Sturgeon House, the D.V. Cain House and a red barn loom at twilight in the once wild and woolly mining town of Bodie, California.

A PHOTOGRAPHER TRAVELS THROUGH THE WEST IN A QUEST TO CATCH THE SPOOKY CHARM OF OLD MINING TOWNS AND CAMPS

Smithsonian Journeys

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BERTHOLD STEINHILBER

"When the mines gave out the town fell into decay, and in a few years wholly disappeared." —Mark Twain

**Chloride (above), in southwestern New Mexico's Black Range, was named for the type of silver ore discovered in the area in 1879. Near the silver mining town of St. Elmo in central Colorado, the Alley Belle Mine's ore loading building (opposite) still clings precariously to a hillside.**

GHOST TOWNS ARE PALPABLE HISTORY, PLACES WHERE YOU CAN REACH OUT and touch the past, where it's so close it seems just around the corner. I know, because as a boy in the Southwest, I couldn't leave the house without being warned (in vain) to stay out of the old mines that riddled the surrounding southern Arizona mountains.

Ghost towns are almost always associated with mines and mountains. Mines, because gold or silver or copper—or even uranium—discoveries drew waves of people to wash up every likely mountain gulch, sprouting towns as they went. Mountains, because that's where erosion revealed the seams and deposits of minerals that the miners so eagerly sought.

But if the seams played out, the people often pulled up stakes for the next diggings, leaving their towns behind to be preserved in the dry Western air. Today, thousands visit ghost towns each year, to be fascinated and touched by such hard evidence of hard lives, the nostalgia of dreams that played out too.

Among the aficionados of these cultural fossils is German photographer Berthold Steinhilber (SMITHSONIAN, July 1999), who captures their eerie ambiance with light and camera. Starting at dusk, using very long exposures, he "paints" the scenes onto film with a powerful headlamp. —*Alexis Doster*

ALL: BERTHOLD STEINHILBER/BILDERBERG

A lonely schoolhouse (top) bleaches in the high sage desert of Widtsoe Junction, in south central Utah. Above, in Johnson, Utah, long frequented by western movie and television production crews, a set gradually fades into ghost town status. Now open to the public, these buildings and nearby sites appeared in such movies and series as *How the West Was Won*, *Wagon Train*, *Gunsmoke* and *Death Valley Days*. The Stark Brothers Mercantile store and the Home Comfort Hotel (right) of St. Elmo, Colorado (altitude 10,000 feet), have endured nearly a century and a quarter of savage Rocky Mountain winters. The town was gradually abandoned after 1930 when the Mary Murphy Mine closed. In 50 years, it produced about $60 million in gold and silver.

"Goodbye God, I'm going to Bodie." —From the diary of a girl whose family was moving to the famously wild town

Near the California ghost town of Masonic, much of the structure of the Chemung Mine still stands. In these buildings, gold- and silver-bearing ore was crushed for smelting. Today, only tourists and sheepherders visit the site, high in the Sierra Nevada.

A well at Bodie, California, glows at dusk, its bucket and dipper still in place. The Methodist church appears through the uprights. Only about 5 percent of the town still remains from its 1880s heyday.

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Fading memories decorate the living room of the Lottie Johl House in Bodie (top), for a time the post office. Above, in the Nevada mining town of Gold Point, the general store features a collection of old bottles. Originally named Hornsilver, the town supported gold mining from 1868 to 1960 before being left to the elements. Today, it is overseen by a tiny band of devoted caretakers.

# THE JOURNEY BEGINS

*So you want to chase down the ghosts of gunslingers and gold miners of the American West?*

**THERE'S NO BETTER** way to catch the rough-and-tumble flavor of the early American boomtown than by visiting one of the thousands of abandoned mining towns, camps and mines scattered across the Mountain West. They range from nameless single mine shafts, indicated on maps with a crossed pick and shovel, to full-fledged towns with museums, restaurants and demonstrations.

**YOU CAN JUST** about still smell the gun smoke at Bodie, which lies 50 miles south of Lake Tahoe in California. In the gold fever years of the late 19th century, one man called Bodie "a sea of sin, lashed by the tempest of lust and passion." Today, Bodie is a state historic park, and you can wander among its dozens of remaining buildings and peek inside to see clothing, furnishings, kitchen utensils and other household items left behind (call 760-647-6445 for more information).

**OTHER SITES** contain little or no amenities, and you may need a four-wheel-drive vehicle to reach them. We recommend in all cases calling ahead for permission (they may be on private property) and asking for information on road and weather conditions—many ghost towns sit at high altitudes and are exposed to the elements. Most of the larger ghost towns have their own Websites.

**VISITORS BEWARE:** these are not re-creations. Old mine shafts are dangerous and should be admired from a cautious distance. These sites may also be home to snakes and other creatures.

**REMEMBER TO TAKE** nothing away from a ghost town, except memories and a roll or two of photographs. To help you with the latter, we've asked photographer Berthold Steinhilber to tell us how he took his haunting shots. Click on **smithsonian-mag.com/journeys/** for his story. We've also packed the site with information on how you—and your children—can shoot photographs outside with great success, whether you're using a disposable camera, a 35mm SLR or the latest in digital technology.

**ON OUR WEBSITE,** you'll also:

- see more of Steinhilber's ghostly images
- learn about other ghost towns and how to get there
- take a tour of landscape paintings in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's traveling exhibition, "Lure of the West"
- thrill to a real-life ghost story told by a SMITHSONIAN editor.

ELIZABETH WOLF

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# King of the Lobby

GILDED AGE LOBBYIST SAM WARD ALMOST ALWAYS GOT HIS WAY, SWAYING MOVERS AND SHAKERS WITH HIS LEGENDARY FOOD, WINE AND CHARM

**BY KATHRYN ALLAMONG JACOB**

**ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES BENNETT**

SAM WARD "KNEW MORE OF LIFE THAN ALL THE DEPARTMENTS of the Government together, including the Senate and the Smithsonian," declared the curmudgeonly historian Henry Adams. *Vanity Fair* dubbed Sam Ward "the Prince of good livers." The *New York World* branded him "the most elegant spendthrift who ever lived."

He was one of the most amazing men of the Gilded Age, an era crowded with remarkable personalities. Most amazing, during the 1860s and '70s, when the term "lobbyist" earned its most nefarious connotations, Sam Ward reigned unspotted in Washington as the "King of the Lobby," or "Rex Vestiari."

He was born on January 27, 1814, in New York City into a family that boasted of colonial governors, Revolutionary War officers (including Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox") and members of the Continental Congress. Sam's father, Samuel Ward, was head of the rock-solid banking firm of Prime, Ward and King. His uncle, Richard Ward, was three times president of the New York Stock Exchange.

After graduating from Columbia College, Sam talked his father into bankrolling a year in Paris, which somehow turned into three more in Heidelberg. In Sam's eyes, they were years

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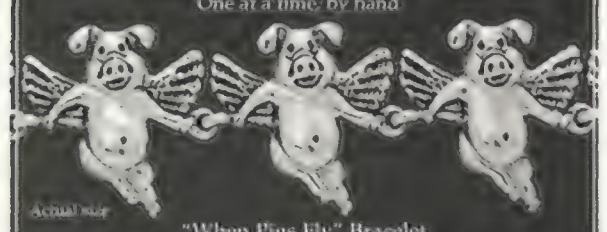

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well spent: he acquired much worldly knowledge, many friends and even a doctoral degree in mathematics from the University of Tübingen before his father summoned him home in 1836.

Sam dutifully went to work in his father's bank. Within the year, he was engaged to marry 17-year-old Emily Astor, granddaughter of John Jacob Astor, reputedly the richest man in America. The three years that followed their wedding in January 1838 were the happiest of Sam's life. He won his father's cautious confidence; he had delightful friends and a wife he adored—and, in November 1839, his first child, a daughter named Margaret and called "Maddie." Sam's happiness, however, was short lived. First, his father died, leaving Sam the top Ward at Prime, Ward and King. Then his brother Henry died suddenly of typhoid fever. The cruelest blow of all came in February 1841, when Emily Astor Ward gave birth to a boy, and both mother and infant son died within the week. Sam found solace in his almost daily correspondence with his surviving brother, Marion, in New Orleans and his good friends Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Charles Sumner in Boston.

When their father's estate was settled, Sam, Marion and his three sisters each inherited several million dollars. Sam Ward, not yet 30, was handsome, rich and lonely. Against everyone's advice, in 1843 he married a beautiful girl from New Orleans named Medora Grymes. For a few years, Sam was happy again. Then, in September 1847, Wall Street was stunned by the news that the old Ward banking firm had crashed. Creditors heaped abuse upon Sam; everyone blamed the debacle on his reckless speculation. At 35, Sam found himself stripped of his fortune, estranged from his wife and casting about for some way to earn a living.

Around Christmastime in 1849, Sam caught the highly contagious

**With friends William H. Hurlbert and Lord Houghton at his right and left, "Uncle Sam" Ward bestows a mock blessing on a young man, now unidentified, in 1875.**

California gold fever and joined the stream of forty-niners cascading toward the Pacific Coast. He invested what capital he could scrape together in merchandise ranging from lead pipes to circular saws and set up shop in a tent. Investing in San Francisco's booming real estate market, Sam claimed he made a quarter of a million dollars in just three months.

On May 4, 1851, Sam's fortune went up in smoke when San Francisco was reduced to ashes by a devastating fire that destroyed all his wharves, warehouses and inventory. With creditors hounding him again, Sam took off for Mexico. The next word his sister Julia (who married reformer Samuel Gridley Howe, became a noted writer and penned the "Battle Hymn of the Republic") had from him was a hastily scribbled note in November 1855, announcing that he was sailing for France to act as a negotiator between European investors and American and Mexican interests. Just what this mysterious mission was, Sam never revealed, but upon his return to New York the next spring, he was in the chips again.

SAM WARD "KING OF THE LOBBY" BY LATELY THOMAS, HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY (BOSTON), 1965; P. 123 JAMES BENNETT

Sam dabbled in Wall Street, but his funds soon began to dwindle. He finagled a berth on an American diplomatic mission to Paraguay and returned with an agreement sealed with 1,000 pounds sterling to lobby on Paraguay's behalf at Washington.

Although Sam was doing well, his relatives, especially Julia, were distressed by his wanderings and questionable dealings. Julia urged him to settle down. "Begin a right and simple life with the capital you have,—yourself. . . . Come back to the old Puritan morals," she begged. "Shake yourself loose from this nightmare. Wake up, and find yourself all that you ever were,—the honest son of an honest man."

Sam did settle down, but not in the way Julia had in mind. Hoping to turn his government connections to a profit and armed with the contract to lobby on Paraguay's behalf, Sam headed for the nation's capital.

When Sam set off for Washington, he was following a long tradition of men who held no office themselves but sought their fortune by influencing men who did. The federal government had barely gotten under way when representatives of special interest groups began lining up to exercise their right to petition guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Sam had the good fortune to begin his career in Washington just as the most powerful lobbyist the nation's capital had yet known, Thurlow Weed, was retiring. Since the 1840s, the genial Weed, a New Yorker like Sam, had been known as the "Wizard of the Lobby." Perhaps Weed saw in Sam his own younger self, or perhaps he recognized in Sam's bonhomie and inexhaustible stream of anecdotes an heir to his "wizardry." But somehow Sam, who had never even visited Washington before, found a mentor and a fresh start, even picking up a few of the departing "Wizard's" richest clients.

Within months, Sam claimed credit for navigating a highly favorable settlement of some Paraguayan claims through Congress, for which he was paid an extra $18,000. He took a small house on F Street and wrote teasingly to "My Dear Old Bird" (Julia), "I have my own crockery and a set of silver marked S.W., which I earned by the sweat of my brow and the oil of my tongue."

Another of Sam's first big clients was Samuel Latham Mitchell Barlow, a New York lawyer who recognized in Sam a fellow aficionado of the good life. Their correspondence was full of puns and discussions of brandies, as well as important business information. In one note, Sam's recipe for Paraguayan maté (a tea-like hot beverage) preceded his vital news:

"It has taken me a week to corral my Congressional elephants and I am at length able to write you favorably touching both your projects. . . . call at the New York Hotel on Monday at 10 a.m., when you will find me at breakfast, and I will unfold to you my *plan de campagne*."

This, like other letters between Sam and Barlow, was sent in confidence and bore the warning "On the □," a Masonic sign that put a communication under a seal of strictest secrecy.

Financed by Paraguay and Barlow, Sam began to give the dinners that made him a legend. His gatherings were successes as much for their peerless fare as for their eclectic guest list. Sam was a Democrat in sympathy with the South, but he permitted no sectional or party divisions at his table. In a capital where, by 1860, entertaining had taken on the same belligerent divisions as politics, Sam's house was neutral territory.

When civil war finally came in 1861, Sam nonetheless remained loyal to the Union and put his contacts at the disposal of his friend Secretary of State William Henry Seward. He spent the war years in constant motion between Washington and New York and on missions to Nicaragua


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**Ward's favorite sister, Julia Ward Howe, publicly defended him against detractors, but privately she worried about his soul.**

and Panama for Barlow. The end of the war brought him back to Washington to fill his purse, which had again grown thin. In a letter to "My Dear Longo" (Longfellow) in 1864, Sam offered a rare glimpse into the vagaries of his financial life: "I made about $10,000 in the 18 months of work . . . , and put it into the famous Gould and Gerry silver mines. I got $300 a month dividend from December til July, when the mine gave out."

The key that gained Sam access to the postwar Johnson Administration was his friendship with Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCulloch. To ease his fiscal program through Congress, McCulloch called upon the most skillful inducer of goodwill he knew: Sam.

Thanks to a string of successes for McCulloch and other clients, by the early 1870s, Sam became widely known as the King of the Lobby. He represented foreign interests concerned with tariffs, shipping rights, and claims. His domestic clients included insurance firms, telegraph companies and railroads. The kingdom over which he reigned had swollen to enormous size in the years after the Civil War. With fortunes to be made in the expanding economy, the stage was set for the era of ruthless lobbying, unchecked spending, attempted raids on the national treasury and conspicuously high living that Mark Twain aptly labeled "The Gilded Age."

The bloated postwar lobby contained more than a few unscrupulous men, and, for the first time, women, whose methods were bribery, both monetary and carnal. Railroad magnate Collis Huntington, looking for a charter for his Central Pacific Railroad, reputedly arrived in Washington with a trunk stuffed with cash for friendly Congressmen. Gunmaker Samuel Colt passed out expensive revolvers to politicians on the eve of legislation that he hoped would result in lucrative contracts.

Sam Ward rose above such tactics. He was proud to be known as the man who knew, better than all of the others, how to grease the skids that guaranteed successful dealings with the government. To Julia he boasted that he was a sort of Figaro: "*Tutti mi chiedono, tutti mi vogliono, . . . sono il factotum della città.* [Everybody calls me, everybody wants me, I am the factotum of the city.]" But what exactly did Sam do for all his clients? How did he win his crown? His closest friends and his family were baffled by his profession, and he wasn't telling. When Longo probed for details in late 1870, "Samilasso" coyly replied, "The mystery of my Washington work shall entertain you some evening, with a bottle of Burgandy and two glasses between us."

One thing he did was entertain on a scale befitting his potentate title. Sam's motto was that the shortest distance between a pending bill and a Congressman's "aye" lay through his stomach. No delicacy, claimed one reporter, was too costly or rare for Sam Ward's table. He shopped for his own terrapin and canvasback ducks, imported his own teas and blended his own coffee. With painstaking care, Sam filed and annotated menus for 15-course meals with many wines (he preferred Rhine wines) and wrote down rules of cookery, sometimes in verse: "To roast spring chickens is to spoil 'em, Just split 'em up the back and broil 'em."

The results of Sam's labors were evenings that, said one guest, were "the climax of civilization." Sam lapped up such praise. He was as gratified by the appearance on menus of fashionable restaurants of dishes "à la Sam Ward" as he was to see a pet bill passed. He was happy to oblige when Secretary of State William Evarts asked him to gauge support for a project to dig a canal across Panama, but equally pleased when the Secretary asked him to suggest champagnes for his daughter's wedding and sent over menus for state dinners for his approval.

Another plus in Sam's column: his guests knew that subtlety and absolute discretion were his rules. He never leaked a confidence, and he never talked about a measure in which he was interested at his dinner table. Instead, asserted the reporter "Carp," "He treated his friends so

**Sam's great friend for nearly half a century, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was "Longo" to his "Sambo" in their many lively letters.**

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SI; HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION LIMITED/CORBIS

well that they were always anxious to do something for him and usually asked how they could help." On the morning when a measure that he was shepherding came up for a vote, a friend might receive a gay little note reading, "This is my little lamb. Be Good. Sam Ward." That was all. Only once, he claimed, did he resort to stronger tactics. In 1874 he wrote Longo of one exploit too delicious to hold back. It concerned:

" . . . a client, eager to prevent the arrival at a committee of a certain member before it should adjourn at noon, who offered me $5,000 to accomplish his purpose, which I did, by having his [the Congressman's] boots mislaid while I smoked a cigar and condoled with him until they could be found at 11:45! I had the satisfaction of a good laugh, a good fee in my pocket, and of having prevented a conspiracy!"

There was a third feather in Sam's cap: he was as charming as his dinners were elegant and his methods discreet. "Nothing was ever served on Sam's table," claimed society reporter Emily Briggs, "that was half as delicious as himself." He was an inveterate gift-giver. After a conversation with Sam, journalist Abigail Dodge wrote home that "he pressed a banana into my hand at parting, and the next morning came up a box of candied fruits." Sam's gifts always arrived with a witty note, usually on his special stationery, engraved with the device of a compass, the needle pointing to SW.

The enchanting "Uncle Sam" was, said *Vanity Fair*, "the one man who knows everybody worth knowing, who has been everywhere worth going to, and has seen everything worth stepping aside to see." He could talk with equal ease about Horace or penny dreadfuls. His young nieces and nephews adored their Uncle Sam, who would appear unannounced, sing, pass out presents, tell stories, quiz them on their Latin, and then vanish. "When he left us," recalled his niece Maud Howe Elliott, "it was as if a regiment had departed."

Sam further burnished his crown by dressing as tastefully as he entertained. He sported jaunty cravats, immaculate linen, diamond studs down his shirt front, and rings on both hands, his favorite, a deep blue, five-carat sapphire surrounded by 42 diamonds. Only Sam, said a nephew, could wear so much jewelry without looking vulgar. By the mid-1870s, Sam had grown stout. His sweeping mustache and elegant goatee were turning gray, and his massive head was bald except for a fringe. Sam Ward "fairly glowed," wrote a reporter.

As 1875 dawned, Sam was at the top of his game. During the first days of January, however, a cloud appeared on the horizon. Sam was summoned before a House committee investigating the one million dollars the Pacific Mail Steamship Company had reputedly spent to obtain a subsidy to transport mail to the Orient. His testimony before the committee was the only time Sam ever talked at length

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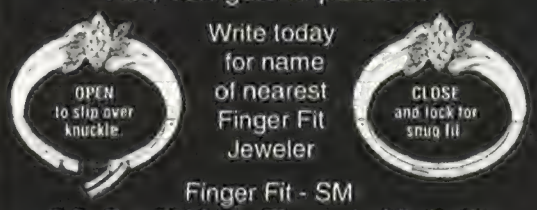


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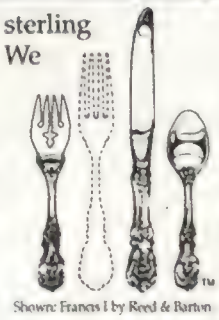

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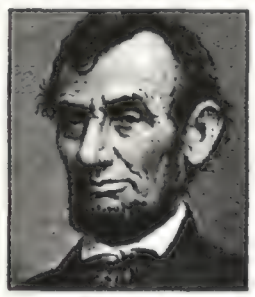

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**On the back of "The King's" card, with its pen-and-ink drawing of a brave warrior of the casks, Ward minutely lettered in French the menu for one of his 15-course dinners.**

about the operation of the lobby.

Sam readily admitted receiving $4,000 for his services on behalf of the bill. His candor was refreshing after weeks of witnesses who had wiggled and dodged. After answering all the Congressmen's questions, Sam launched into an eloquent defense of lobbying. "I am not ashamed . . . of the occupation," Sam lectured. "It is a very useful one. In England it is a separate branch of the legal profession; there they have parliamentary lawyers who do no other business." In America lobbying had no such recognition, and its practitioners were hobbled by a variety of problems, which Sam enumerated:

"To introduce a bill properly, to have it referred to the proper committee, to see that some member in that committee understands its merits, to attend to it, to watch it, to have a counsel to go and advocate it before the committee, to see that members of the committee do not oversleep on the mornings of important meetings, to watch for the coming in of the bill to Congress day after day, week after week, to have your men on hand a dozen times, and to have them as often disappointed; to have one of those storms which spring up in the Adriatic of Congress, until your men are worried, and worn, and tired, and until they say to themselves that they will not go up to the Capitol today,—and then to have the bird suddenly flushed, and all your preparations brought to naught,—these are some of the experiences of the lobby."

Gathering steam, he addressed a subject close to his heart:

"Another point, the question of entertainments is spoken of. There is nothing in the world so excellent as entertainments of a refined order. Talleyrand says that diplomacy is assisted by good dinners, but at good dinners people do not 'talk shop.' But they give people who have a taste in that way the right, perhaps, to ask a gentleman a civil question, and to get a civil answer; to get information which his clients want, and that can be properly given. . . . The entertainments are proportioned to the business of the session. When the business is good, so are the entertainments, and when the business is not good, the entertainments are meager."

One dour member interrupted, "Is there not a great deal of money wasted on good dinners?" To which Sam indignantly replied, "I do not think money is ever wasted on a good dinner. If a man dines badly, he forgets to say his prayers when going to bed, but if he dines well he feels like a saint."

Following Sam's testimony, newspapers ran feature stories on this "good-natured, Pickwickian old fel-

SAM WARD "KING OF THE LOBBY" BY LATELY THOMAS, HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY (BOSTON), 1965

low, . . . famous for his grand entertainments and convivial qualities. . . . " Sam savored the acclaim and wrote to Longfellow that this "business which people imagined must have been unpleasant has turned out profitably. . . . My box is full of letters of congratulations and my fingers sore with hand grips. I have had offers for a book from several publishers."

While Sam was famous, he was not rich. At age 61, he was still scratching for a living. Late in 1875, creditors began to harass him. He wrote to Barlow, asking for work. To Longfellow, he confided, "I am beset by no end of miserables."

Then, as it had before, Sam's luck changed again. Twenty years earlier in California, Sam had nursed a desperately ill, friendless young Irishman back to health. That man was James Robert Keene, who became president of the San Francisco Stock Exchange and a multimillionaire. In 1877 Keene came East and sought out his "Good SAMaritan." Keene not only set up a trust fund for Sam, the income of which, about $3,000 a year, would assure him steady funds for life; he also earmarked a block of railroad stocks for Sam and, when it rose, sold it and gave Sam the profits of almost one million dollars.

Now that he was flush again, Washington saw little more of him. Alluding proudly to his "abdication," Sam took a comfortable apartment near Washington Square in New York and made that city his headquarters. A visitor described Sam, who smoked expensive Russian cigarettes, happily tramping around his rooms, "leaving a trail of white smoke in his wake, like a locomotive."

Upon learning of Sam's windfall, his old friend, Delaware Senator Thomas Frances Bayard, urged him to use this new fortune to "lay plans broad and deep that shall fill the remainder of your days." Did Sam heed the sage advice of his friends? Of course not.



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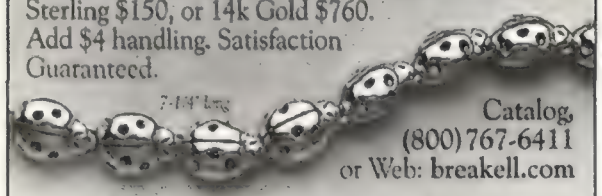

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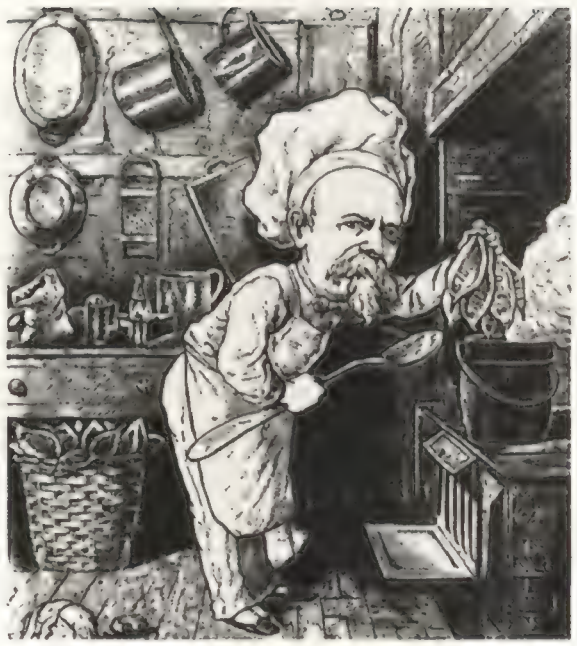

The New York *Daily Graphic* caricatured Ward at work in his kitchen after his 1875 lobbying lecture to a House committee.

Like all of its predecessors, this last fortune, the financial prop of Sam's old age, quickly disappeared, gobbled up by gullibility. By early 1882, a million dollars was irretrievably gone, and Sam had carelessly signed papers making him liable for much more. "I have never been so wretched," Sam confessed to Julia in March 1882, and he offered a feeble explanation: "I was hurried half dazed by bad men whom I thought good ones." To compound his misery, Longfellow, his "Dearest Longo," his friend of nearly five decades, died that month, and Sam was nearly overcome with grief.

Sam's friends advised him to leave the country—immediately. At 68, he was once again a fugitive from creditors. In November 1882 he hastily wrote Julia, "I am off for Europe tomorrow. . . . Not a word about my whereabouts." Sam bobbed up unrepentant in London. His nephew, the young novelist Marion Crawford, visited him in London the next spring and wrote his cousin Maud Howe in astonishment: "You have no conception of what his life is like. I had five days of it, and never met anything less than a baron. . . . "

In the spring of 1884, Sam was in Naples enjoying the pre-Lenten carnival and feasting on succulent steamed mussels. Suddenly, he became violently ill, probably from tainted seafood. Somehow he staggered back to

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Rome to his sister Louisa's home, but he was clearly failing. On the morning of May 19, Sam whispered to nephew Marion, "I think I am going to give up the ghost," and died.

The press immediately marked Sam's passing. The *Times* of London called him, "the most charming of social companions and most genial of hosts." The *New York Sun* paid affectionate tribute to Sam's cookery and diplomacy, while recounting his many fortunes that had slipped away. The *New York Times* devoted two full columns to a review of Sam's colorful life. It was then that the militantly proletarian *New York World* sniped, "Now that he is dead, the world may be said to have lost the most elegant spendthrift who ever lived."

The *Tribune* concluded that Sam's most remarkable accomplishment was in "establishing himself in Washington at the head of a profession which, from the lowest depths of disrepute, he raised almost to the dignity of a gentlemanly business." But neither the *Tribune* nor any of the others who tried could reconcile Sam's Knickerbocker background, his remarkable personality and his chosen profession. "What a puzzle was this universal favorite, whom the sternest moralist could not find it in his heart to dislike, and the boldest lobby agent could yet call his comrade; who lived by arts which nobody could respect, and adorned a questionable life with so much amiability, so much refinement, so much good breeding!"

A puzzle indeed, the inscrutable "Uncle Sam" was no more, and the halls of the mighty in Washington would not soon see his equal. "Let no man attempt the same high art," reporter Emily Briggs proclaimed upon Sam's passing. "The solitary vase has been broken, but the odor is left and clings to it still."

*Kathryn Allamong Jacob, a curator at Harvard's Schlesinger Library, wrote last about sculptor Vinnie Ream (August 2000).*

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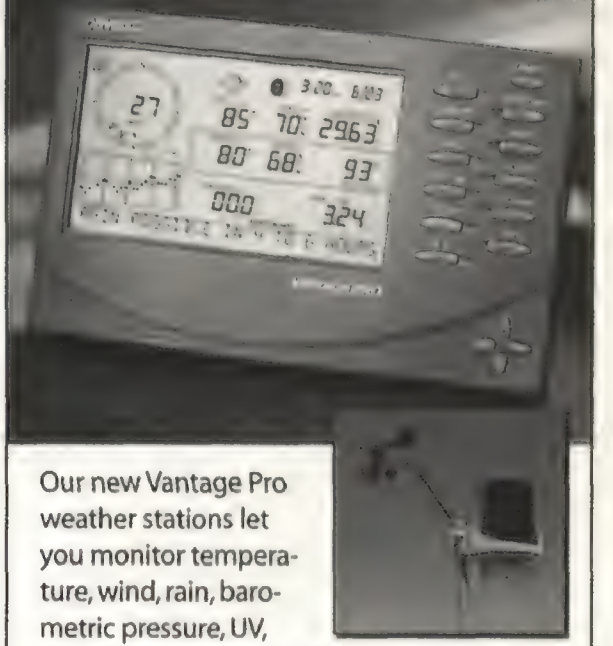
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ARCHIBALD MACLEISH (1892-1982) was among other things a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and playwright, Librarian of Congress, a Harvard-trained lawyer, a professor, a magazine journalist and a man who had what his son describes as the metabolism of a pygmy shrew. He was way beyond versatile; protean is a word that comes to mind. Sons of famous fathers, as our new President knows, bear a special burden. What was it like to be the younger son of the remarkable and many-faceted Archie MacLeish? William MacLeish has spent much of his life working out the answer to that one, and this book tells what he's found.

The "uphill" in the title was the name of the farm in Conway, Massachusetts, that Archie and Ada bought in 1927. It was the MacLeish family's ground zero, the place where the three children were raised and where Archie wrote finely crafted poems, cut hay and raised a few cows between periodic, sometimes extended diversions in precincts like New York and Washington, D.C.

But "uphill" has a second meaning in this memoir of a father and son. For Bill, it was an uphill struggle to understand his father, to find his own place in and out of his shadow, and to resolve, or at least identify, the complex mix of pride and love and envy and resentment that he felt about him. "For half a century I borrowed [his fame]," he writes, "using it as collateral to advance my own station. I came to think of it as a sun under which I could sit and get a nice tan." Eventually, and painfully, he found a sort of balance in his accommodation to Archie, and was able to view him as both cultural icon and parent. At the end he can write, with hard-won satisfaction, that "I'm a recovering MacLeish."

Archie, the son of a successful Chicago businessman, stayed on the prep school–Ivy League track until he was out of Harvard Law School and practicing law in Boston. Then, at 31, he made the first of several abrupt career changes, sailing to Europe with Ada to write poetry and run with the Lost Generation of American artists in 1920s Paris. Then or later the MacLeishes seemed to meet everybody worth meeting—Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Picasso, James Joyce, FDR and JFK, Dean Acheson and Felix Frankfurter, Katharine Hepburn and Richard Burton. Archie honed his art for five years in Paris and established himself as a poet, incidentally writing a line that comes as close as any to a definition of poetry: "A poem," he wrote in *Ars Poetica* in 1926, "should not mean but be."

But poetry was an uphill way to make a living even in good times, and when bad times arrived in the 1930s, Archie went to work for fellow Yale grad Henry Luce as a writer for *Fortune*. In 1939, with the first of his three Pulitzers already in his résumé, he withstood right-wing fulminations that he was a "fellow traveler" and became Librarian of Congress, moving on to a post in the wartime State Department a few years later.

In the end, Archie returned always to Uphill Farm. He wrote every morning in a stone shed within hailing distance of his farmhouse, winning a second Pulitzer for his *Collected Poems* in 1953 and a third for the verse play *J.B.* in 1959.

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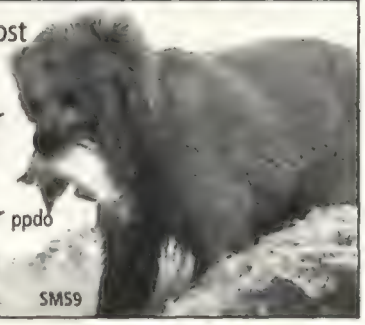

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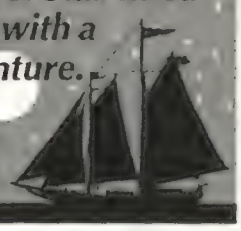

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Bill's memoir metamorphoses from his father's story to his own as he embarks on a career as a journalist, oceanographer and college administrator, displaying a versatility almost matching the old man's. Like sons from time immemorial, he could never get as much of his father as he wanted. "I was desperate for Archie," he recalls of his school years. "He was just too infrequently present, too insubstantial." Perhaps inevitably, the son's life sounds a bit pale next to his father's; it could be the hint of mystery Archie always preserved about himself. In a SMITHSONIAN article about Archie (October 1983) that was the genesis of this book, Bill described Archie as a "secret man, as tightly chambered as a nautilus." Archie, his son wrote, was "more a figure of a father than a father, not so much a parent as someone on whose voyage I was a passenger."

Bill's most fascinating career interlude was a stint as an assistant to Yale president Kingman Brewster in 1969-70, a time when the verities of the safe world that the MacLeishes and most of the rest of us inhabited were being bombarded regularly. Bill heard Brewster stun the Ivy establishment by declaring that he thought it impossible for Bobby Seale or any other black revolutionary to receive a fair trial in America, and he listened anxiously as Abbie Hoffman railed at a crowd 35,000-strong on May Day at New Haven Green.

It was during Archie's final years—he was two weeks short of 90 when he died in 1982—that the father-son relationship finally ripened to something like mutual appreciation. Bill tended the dying Archie when his mother couldn't, and recognized the moment when Archie finally decided to let himself die. "I don't like this play," the old man said. To his son, his last words were, "You get along."

*Reviewer Donald Dale Jackson writes from his home in Connecticut.*


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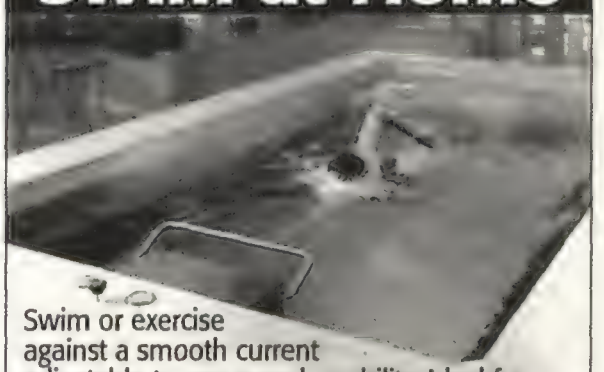

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*Smith Island, Chesapeake Bay* by Frances Dize, Tidewater Publishers (Centreville, Maryland), 1990

*The Parson of the Islands* by Adam Wallace (self-published in Philadelphia), 1861

**The Object at Hand** [p. 38]

CARE's Website: www.care.org

**Hillwood Museum and Gardens** [p. 58]

Hillwood Museum and Gardens, 4155 Linnean Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; Tel: 877-HILLWOOD or 202-686-5807; Website: www.hillwoodmuseum.org

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"Going for the Gold; Local Chef Tracy O'Grady is America's Hope in a Race For One of Cooking's Highest Honors" by Judith Weinraub, *The Washington Post*, February 23, 2000

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**Alexander Calder** [p. 82]

*Alexander Calder 1898-1976* by Marla Prather, National Gallery of Art, 1998

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*Alexander Calder* by Joan M. Marter, Cambridge University Press, 1991

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**Ghost Towns** [p. 110]

U.S./Canada Ghost Towns Website: www.ghosttowns.com

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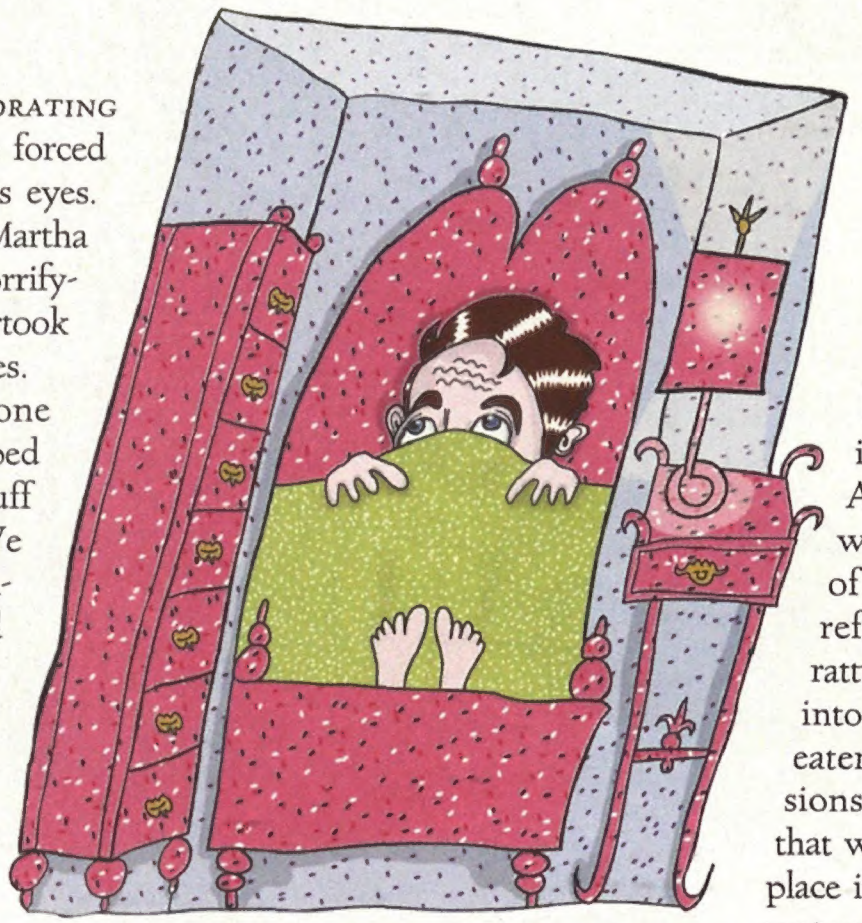
THE LAST PAGE

# Bedtime Horrors

BY LARRY WALLBERG



THOSE DO-IT-YOURSELF DECORATING experts on TV ought to be forced to see the world through a boy's eyes. The other day, while watching Martha Stewart, I was reminded of a horrifying project Mom and Dad undertook in 1957. It still gives me the willies.

To my parents, there was one sure sign that a family had climbed up into the middle class: its stuff was embellished with flecks. We had three sofas, each of which featured shiny threads that looked like flecks. Our yellowish carpet had so many flecks in it that it was nearly impossible to tell where the base tone ended and the markings began. Mom referred to this rug as being "yellow on yellow, with a little yellow." That was her artsy joke.

A dark end table sported a huge light-brown fleck that oozed and dribbled out in a kind of sickly sunburst design. On this table, and in various other places throughout the room, sat Mom's snake plants, flecked by Nature herself. The kitchen linoleum had flecks, as did the Bakelite countertop. Even my corduroys and sweaters had flecks: stipples and dabs of off-color wool, as if the sheep responsible had had a rash. I hated flecks. They were itchy.

We had not yet, however, reached the pinnacle of fleckdom. One day when I was about 8 years old, Mom announced: "Guess what? We're gonna spray-paint the furniture in your bedroom."

I had to speak up. "If it's pink, I'm moving." Mom said: "Let me know if you need help packing."

The name of the base hue was Caucasian Flesh. For days, Mom and Dad, surrounded by a sea of *New York Posts*, daubed away with their brushes, undercoating everything. When they were done, the furniture looked alive, like something hauled straight out of a bad sci-fi movie: *The Invasion of the Bedroom Set*.

Our collection of nonmatching items told the history of bad taste in furnishings. But none of the pieces escaped my parents' Urban Uglification project. A sturdy mahogany dresser became an immense living blob, a scary creature with brass handles for eyes. A small chestnut dresser with Art Deco bookcase wings turned into an organic flying hulk. An enormous mirror frame was transmogrified into a pair of monstrous lips around a reflective, gaping mouth. My ratty old toy box was animated into a rectangular troll that had eaten all of my favorite possessions. Two delicate night tables that would not have looked out of place in the sewing room of a 17th-century French castle suddenly seemed to be manufactured out of cotton candy.

"Yuck!" I screamed. "The whole room is pink. How can I bring my friends in here? They'll think I'm a girl."

"Believe me, when we're done, your friends will be jealous," Dad said.

After the undercoat dried, Mom and Dad unveiled a special latex concoction: flecks in black and flecks in white and flecks in the pinkest pink I'd ever seen. Dad spent hours trying to hook up a rented fleck paint sprayer to the exhaust of our vacuum cleaner. "You'd think they could make these instructions in English. How am I supposed to know which part is *A* and which part is *B*?"

"Lemme try once," Mom suggested. "You're getting crazy here." Mom was the real handyman in our household, because she knew the difference between clockwise and counterclockwise. With one quick emasculating twist, she got the gizmo attached. Then I watched in shock as the machine spit flecks everywhere. Before long, all of my things were covered.

"Disgusting!" I said.

"Listen," Dad responded. "You don't know from what's nice. That's art. Look at it, it's like marble."

"Nice flecks," Mom said. "We did a good thing."

JIM FLANAGAN

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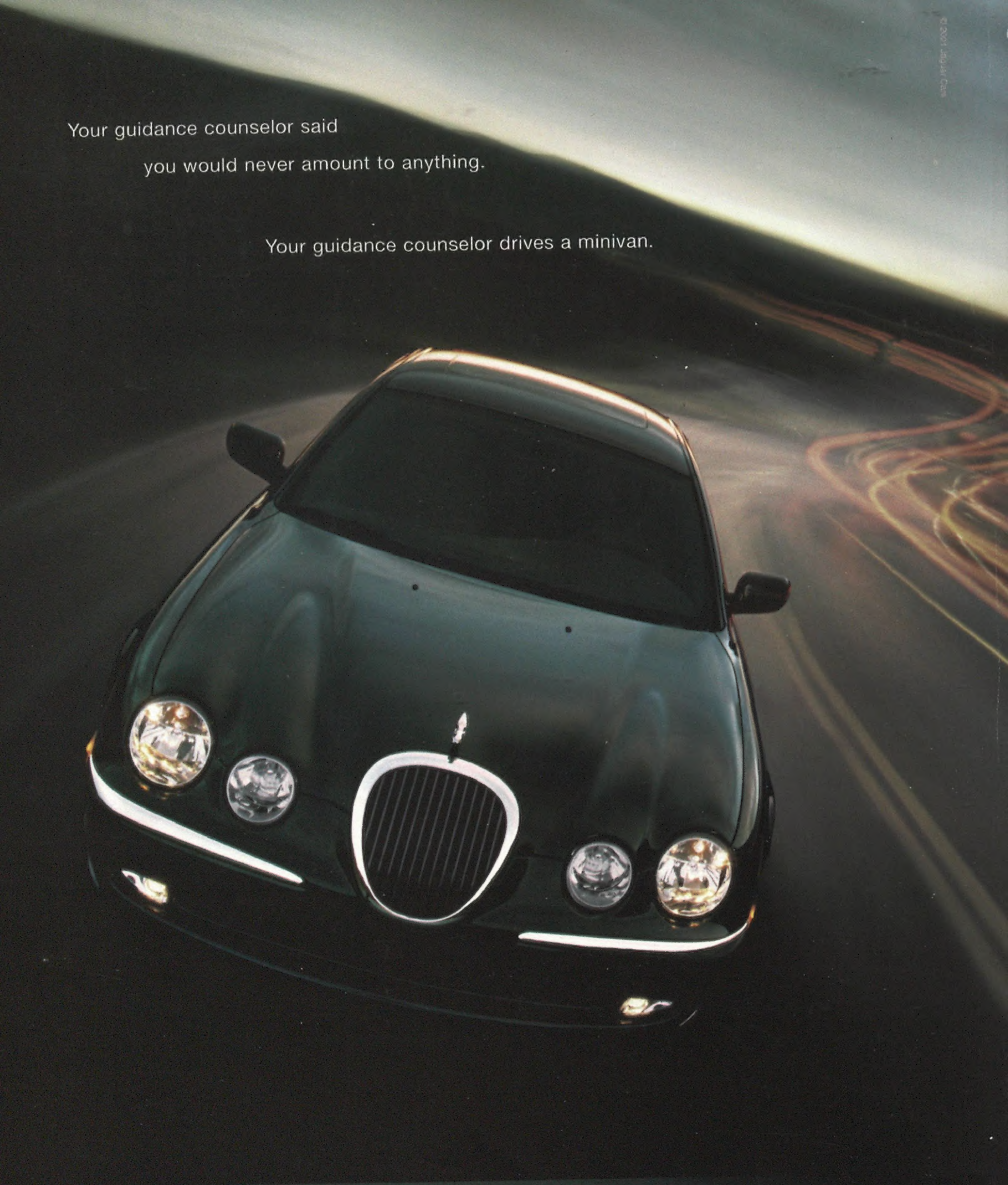

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